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ROMANCES FOR THE MILLION
THE

TROOPER'S REVENGE, OR THE PARTIZAN'S OATH

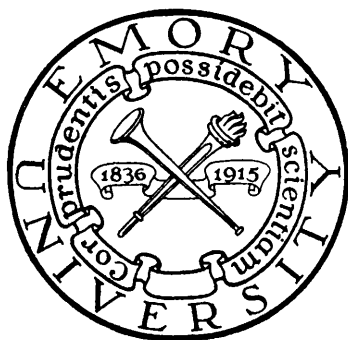


"RALPH OSBORNE!" CRIED REUBEN, SHRINKING BACK.

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THE
TROOPER'S REVENGE

OR,

THE PARTIZAN'S OATH.

BY

ROBERT F. GREELEY.

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5

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THE

TROOPER'S REVENGE:

CHAPTER I.

THE RECRUIT.

IT was on a calm, bright morning at the close of July, 1776, that a peaceful hamlet, on the banks of the romantic Bronx—that miniature river which irrigates one of the loveliest sections of the county of Westchester—became the scene of an excitement unusual to the locality in which it occurred, and quite foreign to the homely and unwarlike dispositions of the dwellers in that secluded and hitherto undisturbed region. The time had been, when the lowing of cattle, the clacking of mill-wheels, or the sounds of the busy flail, threshing the grain, were the only noises which occurred to break the calm repose which brooded o'er it. Old men were there, who had seen, for half a century and more, their progeny grow up and multiply around them, without experiencing a

desire to change the scenes of their mortal joys or sorrowings; for even this beautiful little hamlet upon the Bronx had more than once resounded to the wail of sorrow, and a moss-grown graveyard, studded here and there with wooden slabs—the only monuments within its precincts—pointed out the resting places of those who had terminated here their earthly pilgrimage. Scarcely a stone's throw from the water stood the village church, with modest spire pointing heavenward, and in front of this a grassy lawn, on which a considerable crowd had collected.

Upon the steps of the church, the pastor, with silvery hair, and form bowed down by age, read from a newspaper the memorable act that had, only a few days previously, at Philadelphia, dissolved the tie which bound us to the mother country, and declared the American colonies for ever “free and independent.” Old and young restrained their breaths, and leaned eagerly forward, during the reading of the DECLARATION; but when it had been concluded, a triumphant shout burst involuntarily from the lips of the male portion of the assemblage, and the little bell of the village church sent up its merry peals, as if for a wedding.

While this scene was transpiring, the distant note of a drum was borne upon the breeze towards the group, and at the sound, many a heart throbbed with ill-dissembled anxiety, and

many a manly face grew pale with apprehension.

A few minutes sufficed to dispel the doubts of the little assemblage, for a small party of men, armed with guns, were soon seen approaching from the direction of Byram's River, headed by a drummer, and one who wore in his tri-cornered hat a white cockade—the unmistakable badge of the recruiting-sergeant.

"Good-morning, neighbours!" exclaimed this individual, on coming within hailing distance. "The good news has outstripped me, I see, although I have done my best to keep up with it. This gathering would be but a sorry spectacle for Lord Howe, I'm thinking."

"'Tis William Teneyck!" uttered at least a dozen voices, to whom the person of the recruiting-sergeant was evidently well known. And in a second, the new comer was surrounded by an eager crowd, anxious to glean the latest news from the city.

"I'm sorry to say my news is not encouraging," replied Teneyck; "the movements of the Continental Congress at Philadelphia have given great offence to the red-coat generals, and it is said that Howe is coming with a large force to take possession of New York—which, by reason of its neighbourhood to Canada, the British consider a most important possession!"

There were looks of despair and apprehension among his listeners, which were, however quickly dispelled by the next words of Teneyck.

"But Lord Howe reckons without his host, if he thinks to take our stronghold without a struggle. So says General George Washington, and there's no back out about him, I guess. It would do all your hearts good to hear him talk to his soldiers; any body that can show the white feather, after one of his speeches, must have a heart like a grindstone."

"You have seen the General, then?" asked one interested listener.

"Seen him? yes, and talked with him, too, and shook his hand into the bargain. There aint no pride about *him*, except honest pride; and that every decent man ought to possess, for who isn't proud of his birth?"

The shout that went up at this appeal from Teneyck would have sounded far from pleasantly in the ears of the British leaders.

"So, you've regularly 'listed, eh, Bill?" asked one among the crowd: a tall, but sinister-looking youth, whose countenance bore the traces of recent dissipation.

"Yes, Master Ralph; and what's more, I mean to make you all follow my example before I leave you!"

A coarse, brutal laugh was the reply of the other.

"You'll find little success in this quarter, but I wish you luck, that's all!"

"I hope you aint going to turn Tory, Ralph," said Teneyck.

"I don't know what *you* call Tory," rejoined the person addressed as Ralph; "but this I *do* know: I'm not so great a fool as to link myself to a cause that promises nothing but danger and disappointment, so long as the king yields inducements like this to restrain me!"

And as he spoke, he drew his hand from his pocket, filled with gold pieces, and laughingly shook it before the eyes of the bystanders.

"Shame on you, Ralph Osborne!" said a young man; who had just joined the group in time to overhear the concluding remark of the latter. "I'll venture to say you're the only lad in the village that has given utterance to such degrading sentiments. Boys," he continued, addressing the crowd, while his opponent, abashed, slunk away, "here's William Teneyck, the son of an honest and hard-working Yankee farmer, who has left his newly-made bride, and a flourishing business, to take up arms in defence of his suffering country. Next to our God, we shou'd dearly cherish the land that gave us birth. Who among you is so cowardly, or so mean, as to refuse to take up arms for her in her hour of need? I am aware that I need not ask the question. Teneyck is here for the purpose of obtaining recruits. You know, boys, that I have ties to bind me to this spot not less dear than those which influence all of you; yet I am willing to relinquish every

present joy, because my country calls on me for aid!"

And in a bold flourishing hand he wrote upon Teneyck's roll-book, the name Reuben Gayler.

The scene which took place at this juncture beggars description. Almost all the young men in the place hastened to follow the example so nobly set them by young Gayler. In the meantime the women were seen hurrying towards the spot with arms and accoutrements, with which they hastened to endow the little band of heroes.

"Now, boys," exclaimed Gayler, "to the church? A prayer for those we love, and a blessing upon the sacred cause to which we have pledged ourselves, and then to meet the red-coats?"

The little bell had ceased its peals; all was silent as the grave. The group moved, as by a common impulse, towards the church, at the portal of which they were met by the aged pastor, whose outstretched hand and reverent attitude arrested them.

"Beneath this glorious canopy," he said, "nature's self-chosen temple, most fitting scene for so solemn an occasion, let us beg that blessing without which no cause is certain of success."

We draw a veil over the picture; there are feelings which may be better imagined than described, and of this nature were those which

actuated the little band whose movements we have just described.

Before the sun had thrown his parting rays over the little hamlet by the Bronx, Reuben Gayler and his party were on their way to join their brother patriots at New York.

One afternoon, not long after the occurrence of the foregoing incidents, a party of mounted troopers, wearing the British uniform, came in sight of the Bronx, not far distant from the spot on which Reuben and his comrades had taken a last adieu of their friends. Strangely enough, the individual who rode at their head, although attired in garments far different from those in which we last saw him clad, wore the ill-favoured lineaments of Ralph Osborne. For this glittering distinction, and not from any feeling of attachment towards the mother country, he had bartered his honour; and, it may readily be imagined, that one who was capable of such black-hearted treachery would not hesitate at the performance of any action, however vile and degrading, that might gratify his lusts, or pamper his fiendish passions.

It seems almost impossible that such villainy could spring spontaneous in the breast of one so young; for Osborne was not, certainly, older than twenty; though he had earned an evil reputation throughout the country, few looked upon him, up to the time of these proceedings, as being anything more than a drunkard and an idler. The time had come, however, for

him to throw off the mask, and before that day had passed, the name of Ralph Osborne, coupled with epithets denoting everything that is vile and infamous, had spread with lightning-like rapidity.

"So, this is your viper's nest," said one of the troopers who rode at Osborne's side. "A pretty spot for a painter, it must be confessed. What a pity that your countrymen are such a stubborn pack of rebels! There are some good fellows among 'em, too, I dare say; but we are commanded to regard them all as so much carrion, and if they persist in their perverseness——"

"They must suffer for it," added Osborne. "I owe many a grudge in this same village, and since chance has put it in my power to be revenged, I assure you I shall not neglect the opportunity."

"It must come rather hard, though, to betray one's friends," said the other, with a quiet sneer.

"Yes, provided one has any friends to betray," replied Osborne, sulkily. "As for me, I have no friends, and shall therefore have the fewer sins to charge my conscience with. I have not forgotten how farmer Leslie slighted me, nor how the old tub of butter that keeps yonder tavern cast me from his door one winter's night, because I was drunk, and wouldn't pay my score. I have not forgotten these and many other slights; and, blast them,

they shall pay for it, as sure as my name's Ralph Osborne!"

Even the sergeant of the company of troopers with whom Osborne was riding, could not utterly conceal the contempt inspired in him by the words of the latter, but he prudently forbore to comment upon what he had heard, and after a pause of some minutes the party drew up before the door of a small tavern which stood at the road-side, about a mile from the village.

The moment the troopers made their appearance, there was a general scampering about the premises. The red-headed ostler hid himself in the hen-roost; the fat chamber-maid ran to the garret for protection; while the landlord and his wife, after barricading the doors, beat a hasty retreat to the garret, where was deposited their only weapon of defence, a huge, old-fashioned blunderbuss, which had evidently been an heir-loom in the family.

"Do these good people take us for cannibals, that they scatter thus at our appearance?" said the sergeant; "go, some of you, and sound a summons," he added, addressing the men.

"You stand too much upon ceremony, sergeant," said Ralph, sulkily. "Were mine the right of command, I'd have the old sinner's house about his ears in short order."

"Doubtless," replied the sergeant, dryly; "and return to Kingsbridge supperless, with a pack of howling Continentals at our heels.

I prefer a less troublesome method of accomplishing our object."

The loud and continued knocking at the doors and shutters, coupled with a few threats from the indignant and fatigued troopers, had soon the effect of bringing Boniface to his senses, and, ere long, himself and his trusty blunderbuss were seen to emerge from one of the topmost windows.

"Have patience, gentlemen, and you shall be satisfied," he cried, in great trepidation. "Only spare our lives, and everything we have is at your disposal."

"Tut, tut, man," said the sergeant; "all we desire is good fare, and straightforward answers. So that these be accorded, no harm shall happen you."

The rapidity with which Master Dawson, the proprietor of the "Jolly Farmer's Inn," descended from his elevated station, was somewhat surprising to men who expected to meet with nothing but opposition wherever they might turn their steps.

A table and benches were provided in front of the hotel—a spot wisely selected by the sergeant, on account of the view which it afforded, both of the road and of the adjacent country; a circumstance which would enable the little party to guard against any surprise; for the sergeant's confidence in Ralph Osborne's honesty was not of the strongest nature, and he always preferred being on the safe side of

the question. They did not know that Reuben Gayler had departed from the city only a few days before, taking with him all the available force in that section of the country, or they might have taken less pains to ensure their safety.

Osborne knew this fact well, though it did not exactly suit his purposes to confide it to the sergeant; for he had an especial motive in offering himself as a guide to this small party of British troopers, secretly despatched by General Howe, for the purpose of exploring that fertile region of country lying between Byram's River and Kingsbridge.

A rather hazardous undertaking, had the circumstance come to the ears of Washington at the proper time. But the expedition had been, thus far, conducted so secretly, and Ralph Osborne, its director, was so intimately acquainted with the ground they were traversing, that there was little or no danger of a surprise.

To return to the sergeant and his companions. Dawson had ransacked his larder, according to promise; and soon the savoury fumes of pig and bacon sent up their odours on the evening air. The exertions of the landlord had been the more earnest, inasmuch as Ralph Osborne had communicated to him, in a whisper, the gratifying intelligence, that any lack of civility or liberality on his part would lead to the inevitable destruction of his family, while of his

hostel, not one stone should rest upon another. Under such circumstances, Master Dawson was only too willing to oblige.

"Come hither, mine host!" exclaimed the sergeant, when he felt himself waxing content upon the old man's good cheer. "From seeing so many red coats in your vicinity, you, of course, must naturally imagine that our errand is of anything but a friendly nature."

"You are good enough to say so," responded Boniface, bowing and scraping, as though the sergeant had conferred a great favour on him by the announcement.

"While we confess that our object in visiting these parts, is to hold in proper subjection the enemies of the king," pursued the sergeant, "we are not unaware that an honest soul may be occasionally found—like yourself, for instance—who joins with his Majesty's loyal subjects in condemning the shameful rebellion which some discontented colonists are endeavouring to hatch against the laws."

"You're right in calling it shameful," stammered Dawson; "it's a most wicked, shameful, undutiful piece of business, and I, for one, wash my hands of it! Allow me to replenish your tankards, gentlemen,—pray do!"

"Thank ye! Well, as I was saying, when his Majesty's officers find so staunch a friend as yourself, they never fail to make known his name and services; and the king, mine host, is

liberal towards the loyally inclined. Behold!" he exclaimed, drawing from his bosom a well-filled purse, and holding it up before the astonished inn-keeper; "that is one of the results of a close attention to duty."

"And does his Majesty thus reward all who serve him?" asked Dawson, who could not keep his eyes from the sergeant's purse.

"All, without exception. But perhaps you doubt what I say! Here! help yourself, man. Nay, don't be shy. There's more where this came from!" and he proffered the purse to Dawson, who tremblingly withdrew a single piece, and then looked like a thief caught in the act.

"Take back your gold, Mr Sergeant!" he exclaimed, a moment afterwards, "I love the dross, but I won't betray my country. Take all I have, and welcome, all but my honour."

"Here's language for a tavern-keeper," said the sergeant, overflowing with ale. "It's too late, my man; you've accepted the dross, as you call it, and are now in the king's service as long as he sees fit to hold you. Here, Seymour—Larkins, give him a cockade and bring him along with you. The sun is getting low and we must be moving."

If the appearance of the troopers had created a commotion, when their vicinity was first made known to the inmates of the *Jolly Farmer*, far greater was that occasioned by the sudden command of the sergeant. In an in-

stant, the women-folk were clinging to the knees and arms of the furious sergeant, who was rapidly beginning to feel the effects of his potations, while Mistress Dawson, with her arms a-kimbo, stood in the doorway, and launched at him a volley of invective and reproach.

"Death and damnation!" cried the sergeant; "will no one release me from these she-fiends! And you, you blasted Yankee turn-coat," addressing Osborne, "I'll make you sweat nicely for betraying me into such a den?"

"Revenge is in your power!" said Osborne, quietly; "shall we burn the old rookery? I await only your word."

"Do what you please; burn, tear, destroy. Do anything to rid me of my troubles!" was the angry reply of the half-drunken trooper.

It did not require many minutes for Osborne, still rankling under the recollection of the slight put upon him by Dawson, to execute his order; and as the moon arose, her early beams were mingled with the lurid glare of the flames kindled by the traitor's hand.

Heedless of the shrieks of the women, the marauders, having sated themselves with booty, placed the unlucky landlord upon a horse, and having securely bound his arms, to guard against an escape, the entire party took their way in the direction of the village, whose inhabitants awakened from their fancied security, only to fall by the bullets of an un-

sparing foe. A few resolute men, who had been left behind, to protect the property of the village, assembled in haste at the church, and for some time managed to keep their assailants at bay; but the torch of the incendiary, by filling the sacred edifice with smoke, soon convinced the little band of heroes that resistance was worse than useless.

At the extreme limits of the village lived the Leslies, the family of a sturdy farmer, whose entire happiness was centred in those by whom his hearth was surrounded. The abrupt entrance of Ralph Osborne, with a file of men at his heels, was the first intimation they received of the neighbourhood of an enemy.

"So-ho! farmer Leslie," he exclaimed, in a taunting tone; "does your cheek grow pale at the sight of one whom only a week ago you spurned from your door with contempt and loathing? The renegade, as you called him, has not forgotten the debt he owes you, and has come to pay it back with interest."

"Mad boy! what freak is this?" asked Mr Leslie, with an eye flashing fire and disdain; and while he spoke, he reached down from its resting-place above the mantel, a rusted gun.

"You will find it a freak that will cost you dearly, farmer!" was Osborne's reply. "Give them a volley, lads, if they resist. As for the maiden, I will look to her."

A fragile figure, with a profusion of auburn ringlets falling down about her well-rounded

shoulders, sprang from the corner into which she had shrunk, upon the entrance of Osborne, and threw herself with a cry upon her father's breast.

"They shall slay us both," she exclaimed; "they shall not part us!"

"My poor Grace!" replied the farmer, despondingly; "they have us in their toils, and it is impossible for us to escape; yet let me strike one blow for thee! Though my arm is weak and feeble, it owns yet sufficient strength to shield a daughter's chastity. Back! or you rush upon sure destruction!" he added, as Osborne made a motion to approach.

"Tempt them not, oh! tempt them not!" cried Grace. "The loss of a single life may transform them into fiends, and we shall all be sacrificed to their fury."

"The shedding of blood may be easily avoided," said Osborne; "let the maiden become an hostage for her father. I ask no more."

"Villain!" exclaimed Leslie.

"Nay, father, let them have their way. They will not harm *me*. I will willingly become an hostage. I am sure they will not long detain me. Their general will grant an interview, and I will return ere half the week expires."

"You do not know them, child. Above all, you know not *him*. I would sooner die than witness thy dishonour." "We waste time," said Osborne; "take them in charge, I say!"

The consequence be on your own heads!" exclaimed the excited farmer.

"They were his last words. Several of the troopers advanced to seize him, when a ball from the farmer's gun suddenly laid low the foremost.

"Forbearance is no longer a virtue," exclaimed Osborne, who felt himself slightly wounded in the wrist. "Fire, and spare not."

Simultaneously with the command, Grace Leslie found herself torn forcibly from the embrace of her father, who almost instantaneously fell beneath the murderous discharge. She was conscious of being raised in some one's arms, of being carried through smoke and fire into the open air; and then her senses utterly forsook her. Osborne, mad with pain, and almost delirious at the thought of possessing one whom he had so long viewed with a covetous eye, raised her quickly to the saddle and the party, satisfied with the mischief they had effected, beat a hasty retreat, guided on their way by the light of the unholy fires which they had so wantonly kindled.

CHAPTER II.

THE CRISIS.

TOWARD evening of a certain day in July, about the time of the foregoing occurrences, a large concourse of people, of all ages and conditions, were assembled in Broadway to witness the entrance into the city of a regiment of troops, which General Lee had withdrawn from Connecticut, for the purpose of protecting the rights of the inhabitants, who had for so many years had cause to complain of the unjust and oppressive measures pursued toward them by the mother country. The occasion was interesting on more than one account; for various events which had recently transpired rendered it evident that, unless some act of concession was speedily adopted in behalf of the colonists, a long and sanguinary struggle was impending.

Before proceeding farther with our narrative, it may be as well to dwell, for a few moments, upon the position of affairs at this crisis. New York was then in a condition which rendered the result of a contest, in the event of the war being transferred to that vicinity, very uncertain. Not only was the arsenal of the State deficient in supplies, but the citizens were so divided into cliques and factions, that there was

no knowing upon whom to place reliance. New York had always been a stronghold of Toryism, and many of the most influential families were devoted loyalists. A number of British troops had also been quartered, from the days of the old dominion, in the town, and even at the period of which I write, the "Asia" British man-of war, lay for some time opposite the city, ready to unmask her guns in case of an emergency.

Notwithstanding these discouraging facts, "Sons of Liberty" succeeded in getting the upper-hand of their political opponents, and it was while matters were in this condition, that Lee entered the town with his continental troops. The commander of the "Asia" hearing of his advance, sent word to Lee that if he entered the city, he would set it on fire. Lee's answer was in perfect keeping with his character.

"Go back," said he to the messengers; "and tell your commander that if he sets fire to a single house, in consequence of my coming, a hundred Tories shall hang in chains for it!"

It is almost unnecessary to say that the British leader thought better of his threat and *did not* fire the city!

The arrival of Lord Howe, and Washington's appearance upon Long Island soon put an end to this suspense. The little party which had placed itself under the command of Reuben Gayler, arrived just in time to participate in the glorious but disastrous action which ensued.

The events which accompanied the memorable battle of Long Island are so well known, that to recount them here would be superfluous. The Americans fought courageously, but without skill, and the prospect of being cut off by the British induced a panic, which ended in the total overthrow of the American army. With the concurrence of his brother officers, Washington ordered a retreat, and the American forces eventually took up their quarters at Kingsbridge, leaving the city in the hands of the enemy.

A party of ladies, whose attire and general bearing proclaimed their standing, were gathered upon the balcony of the Governor's mansion—then occupied as a temporary residence by General Clinton. The day had been exceedingly mild and pleasant, and the natural vivacity of the party was much enhanced by the presence of a party of officers, dressed in British uniform, who were in the best possible spirits, owing to their recent successes. One only among this merry group appeared sad. This was a young lady whose extreme loveliness of face and figure rendered her a formidable rival to the more matured beauties by whom she was surrounded. Her hair was of auburn hue, and fell in a cloud of glossy ringlets about her symmetrical form, in which were united the graces of a Hebe and a Venus. The unremitting attention paid her by the officers showed that she had nothing to regret, as far

as that particular was concerned; but there was a settled melancholy in her dark blue eyes, and a sadness upon her lip, that not all the endeavours of the thoughtless crowd gathered about her could relax.

"I fear that we shall fail of making a convert of our fair little American, here," said the eldest of the ladies, interrupting a short pause which had taken place in the conversation. "Albert tells me that he has given up his self-imposed task in despair," she added, turning to Grace.

"Lady Arlington cannot blame me for being stubborn on this point," replied Grace, raising her eyes fixed in reverie upon the ground, to those of the speaker. "I was born and bred upon American soil, and much as I deprecate the unhappy quarrel which has alienated us from our kin, I cannot but believe that my country's cause is a just one."

"A year's experience will soon undeceive you, *ma belle*," returned Lady Arlington, lightly; "why, for my part, the mere contrast between our dashing officers and the clumsy boors who pretended to lead your armies, would be sufficient to make me turn traitor."

Grace coloured to the temples at this ungenerous allusion to her countrymen, but remained silent. A young man in the British uniform who had been for some time listening to the conversation, in which he occasionally joined, observing the mortification which was

so plainly depicted upon the features of Grace Leslie, hastened to relieve her embarrassment.

"Nay, mother, you are unkind," he said; "with us soldiers, generosity toward a fallen foe is considered a duty. I undertake, henceforward, to become Miss Leslie's champion against your attacks."

"I trust that Miss Leslie's arguments may not make converts of us, by way of turning the tables," said Lady Arlington; "but see—here is an instance of that soldierly generosity to which you alluded just now."

And as she spoke she pointed to a crowd who were at that moment passing the house, driving before them, with the assistance of a file of soldiers, a group of American prisoners, who had, apparently, just been taken. All eyes centered upon this picture, at the words of Lady Arlington; but fearful was the change which came over Grace. She cast but one glance upon the group, and uttering a slight cry, fell back, without sense or motion, into the arms of Captain Arlington.

To those who were witnesses to this thrilling scene, the emotion manifested by Grace was a profound mystery; but there was one, and one alone, among the group, who, by a species of instinct vouchsafed only to lovers, comprehended at once the cause of her agitation. Captain Arlington observed the glances which passed between Reuben and Grace, and then for the first time since his introduction to Miss

Leslie, the gallant officer became aware that he had a rival. Happily for Reuben, in the hasty and disinterested glance which he had cast at the window occupied by Lady Arlington, he had not recognized Grace, or he might have gone to his place of confinement with feelings far different from his present sensations.

At an angle of the open and irregular common now known as the Park, stood, in those days, a tall, unfinished edifice of dark stone, to which common custom had imparted the name of *Bridewell*, but which, under the government of the infamous Cunningham, had earned the title of *Provost*. Here, in cells scarcely larger than the den in which they confine the wild beasts of the menagerie, were huddled together hundreds of human beings, whose only crime was in having fought for the liberties of their common country. Fed upon food of the coarsest description, and denied the smallest luxury, they were treated more as cattle than as prisoners of war, and many perished from the manifold sufferings which Cunningham's malice forced them to undergo. During the day, the pale, wan features of the more favoured prisoners might be detected at the grated apertures which gave a dim and uncertain light to the interior of this American Bastile; and at night the air resounded with the groans and imprecations of its dying victims—sounds which were as music to the ears of Cunningham.

Into this loathsome place Reuben and his companions were huddled, like so many sheep, by their magnanimous captors, after being paraded through the town, in all their rags, a spectacle to the populace, and subjected to every indignity that human malice can devise. Some of these poor fellows looked upon death as being certain, and had given up all prospect of deliverance; but there were others whose sanguine temperaments were not as susceptible of discouragement, and who looked forward to the future, in the midst of their trials, with renewed hope and confidence. Of this number was Reuben Gayler. He was yet extremely young, and to minds determined upon overcoming every impediment which they may be called upon to encounter, life, he knew, offered no obstacle that might not be surmounted. When, therefore, the gates of his gloomy dungeon had closed him in, he did not give himself up to despondency, but endeavoured, with all the eloquence of which he was master, to reanimate the drooping spirits of his companions in misfortune, and in his dreams that night, the gentle figure of Grace Leslie hovered about his stony couch, and bade him still hope on!

CHAPTER III.

THE FAIR CAPTIVE.

It was the morning of the scene described in the previous chapter. Captain Arlington had made many excuses for leaving his post, and making inquiries after the health of Miss Leslie. She, however, had confined herself to her room, despite the solicitations of Lady Arlington, (who attributed her protegee's agitation to some nervous affection of the body), that she would make herself visible, as usual, to the little circle of notabilities of which Lady Arlington's coterie was composed. During the morning, Grace dispatched her maid to her kind protectress, requesting a private interview, which the latter immediately granted.

Since the melancholy occurrence which had deprived her of a father and a home, her maid had undergone a variety of adventures, in themselves sufficiently romantic to render her an object of general curiosity. After the accomplishment of his sinister purposes with regard to Mr Leslie and the unfortunate tavern-keeper, Osborne had conveyed his pretty captive to a house of low repute in the outskirts of the town, where he had left her, under the

charge of an old harridan named Martha Kelly, with strict injunctions not to allow Grace her liberty, nor suffer her to be seen by anybody save himself, unless with his consent. By pursuing this course of conduct towards her, he hoped to be able to subdue the haughty spirit which had ever been manifested during her interviews with himself, and eventually to induce her to accede to his nefarious designs. He little knew the stubborn mettle of which Grace Leslie was composed. To all his protestations and beseechings she turned a heedless ear, and Osborne, getting tired of the sport, was revolving in his own mind a plan for the accomplishment of his villanous intentions, when Providence interposed in behalf of his intended victim, and placed within her reach the means of effecting her escape.

Not long after her seizure and detention by Osborne, a party of officers, journeying from Boston to New York, chanced to be overtaken by a violent storm, and as Dame Kelly's dwelling, which professed, according to her sign, to be a house of entertainment for both man and beast, was close at hand, they bent their horses' heads in that direction, and in spite of her remonstrances, took possession of the premises. Among this party was Captain Arlington, a young and handsome officer in the king's fourth regiment of foot, and while he was taking a survey of the environs just after the violent storm above alluded to, it so

happened that his eyes encountered, at an upper window of the dwelling which he had made his refuge, the fragile figure of Grace Leslie, who had been for some moments endeavouring to attract his attention, in the hope of finding in him an advocate and protector. Arlington's chivalrous nature was strongly affected by this little incident, and he forthwith sought the presence of Dame Kelly, for the purpose of questioning her in relation to the fair being whom he had observed at the window. To his astonishment and chagrin, the old woman immediately denied the presence of any such personage.

"A lady throwing herself into the company of the likes of an old cretur like me!" she exclaimed in well-feigned amazement. "Now heaven forbid, your honour! It's after flattering me you would be."

"Come, come, my good woman," said Arlington, whose curiosity was momentarily increasing, for he immediately perceived that the harriidan had some sinister design which she feared to disclose to her guest. "This is all very well, but, between you and I, I am so well satisfied of the presence beneath your roof of a young and lovely lady, that I am resolved, at every risk, to penetrate the secret."

"It must have been the housemaid that your honour saw," persisted Dame Kelly, in despair of convincing him.

"Do housemaids generally dress in silks?"

asked Arlington, maliciously. "But I am not trifling in regard to this matter, as you will soon learn to your cost, if you persist in thwarting me in my wishes. Here! take this gold," he continued, giving her a shining piece from his purse; "it will serve as a kind of salvo to your disappointment. And now, conduct me to the presence of the lovely unknown."

Dame Kelly saw that it was useless to resist, and her feelings having been somewhat soothed by the *douceur* which Captain Arlington had given her, she proceeded to conduct him to the presence of the mysterious unknown.

Chance or destiny would so have it, that at this moment, Ralph Osborne, made valorous by wine, and burning to accomplish his anticipated victory over Grace, approached Mother Kelly's domicile. The moment the hag laid eyes upon Osborne, her figure was agitated by an unaccountable tremor.

"Sure here's a pretty to do!" she whimpered piteously, "Mr Captain, dear, come down, do, and save the bones of a poor lone widow woman, that has nobody but herself, and protect her from harm."

But Captain Arlington had already introduced himself to the notice of Miss Leslie, and his ears, pre-occupied with the damsel's tale of distress, heard nothing of the cries and remonstrances of the terrified widow. It was

not until a scream in the shrill accents of Mother Kelly's piping voice reached him from below, followed by the fall of a heavy body, and the noise of a scuffle, that the young officer assured himself of the fact that others had entered the domicile. Before he could call upon the beldam to explain the meaning of the interruption, a number of British soldiers filled up the entrance to the apartment in which Grace had been confined, prominent among whom arose the ill-boding countenance of Osborne.

"H—ll and furies! am I to be thus thwarted in all my undertakings?" shouted Osborne, mad with vexation. "Arrest that officer for neglect of duty!" he exclaimed to those who were nearest him. "I will be responsible for the charge."

"Heed him not, madam," said Arlington, in reply to a cry of terror from the affrighted Grace; "he dares not offer violence to me. Stand aside, or you shall repent this insolence," he added, drawing his sword, and turning to Osborne.

"I simply perform my duty," answered Osborne, in the same strain as before. "It is known that you are in charge of dispatches from the Commander-in-chief at Boston, and it can hardly redound to the credit of a British officer to be discovered in such close vicinity to a pretty woman, when he should be, ere this, in the presence of his superiors."

Astounded at the insolence of the charge, Arlington knew not, in the surprise of the moment, what answer to make, and Grace was struggling wildly in the arms of Osborne, and his own arms were pinioned behind him, ere he could exclaim against the villanous treatment to which he had been subjected. He caught but one glimpse of Grace as he was hurried from the room; resentment and mortification rendered him speechless, and even the sight of the bleeding and inanimate form of the old beldam, who lay at the foot of the stairs, where she had been hurled by Osborne, drew from him not the slightest manifestation of surprise.

CHAPTER IV.

VILLANY FOILED.

THUS far Osborne had triumphed; but even the most accomplished of villains are prone to overreach themselves in the end, and Osborne was not an exception to the general rule. Captain Arlington, finding resistance to be useless, had suffered himself to be conducted under the escort of half a dozen tipsy troopers, to the city, where having related in a clear and concise manner the history of his previous day's adventure, he was honourably released.

while, at his suggestion, Osborne was placed in a separate room of the old Provost, and held to answer. The upshot of the entire matter was the release of Grace Leslie, who immediately found shelter under the protecting roof of Lady Arlington, a near connection of Lord Howe, and mother to the young officer, whose name we have frequently made use of in connection with that of Grace—and the signal punishment of Sergeant Osborne, who, after being publicly flogged for his misconduct, was drummed from the regiment to which he had attached himself—the jest and by-word of his former companions.

Such were the circumstances which had made Grace an inmate, against her own desire, of Lady Arlington's dwelling. Taking into consideration her inartificial loveliness and numerous charms of person, it was not to be wondered that Captain Arlington had become so deeply interested in her welfare. But a "change had come o'er the spirit of his dream," and the time had at last arrived, when he saw that the fair fabric upon which he had based so many visions of happiness, was about to fall. Attached to the Governor's mansion was a luxuriant garden, beneath whose shadowy retreats Grace had often delighted to wander, for the purpose of indulging in those thoughts of the by-gone time, which had once rendered her life a summer's day without a cloud, and

upon which the presence of Lady Arlington and the frivolous circle by whom she was continually surrounded operated as a restraint.

The day following the occurrence which had produced so great a change of feelings both in Grace and of Captain Arlington, was one of unusual magnificence, and Grace had strolled forth upon the lawn, to catch a parting glimpse of the sun as it sank in fiery lustre beneath the horizon, and to inhale the cool breeze of the evening, sweeping townward from the sea. Bathed in a perfect flood of golden light, the different islands of the bay stood out in bold relief amid the sparkling waters; suggesting in the mind of the gazer an idea of those blissful retreats which Oriental fable designates as the future home of loving spirits, separated by adverse circumstances, and permitted to meet no more on earth.

It may be conceived that the thoughts of Grace Leslie were not of a very lively or agreeable nature; the loss of a fond, doating father and the destruction of a home, of which she had been at once the ornament and the life, were circumstances by no means calculated to excite agreeable emotions in the breast of so young, and when alone she could give vent to her feelings without the fear of incurring the ridicule or the pity of a circle of newly formed acquaintances, whom she could not avoid looking upon as having been instrumental in promoting her misfortunes.

While absorbed in one of these customary reveries, Grace had strolled unconsciously some distance towards the beach, and it was not until she had advanced to within a few yards of him, that she became aware of the presence of Captain Arlington who had been drawn to the spot, apparently, by the same impulse which had actuated herself. Both felt somewhat embarrassed at this unexpected rencontre, for Arlington, with that delicacy which is an innate characteristic of the true gentleman, had refrained from intruding upon her privacy, when he understood that it was her desire to be alone. An opportunity had presented itself for the solution of the mystery which had so long troubled him, and he resolved that, come what might, he would for ever set at rest these doubts. If the result proved favourable, he would make an honourable offer of his heart and hand. If unfavourable, he would immediately throw up his furlough, and rejoin his regiment, then on the point of entering into active service against the united force of Washington.

"I beg, Miss Leslie, that you will not withdraw, until I have had an opportunity of parting with a secret which is now the great annoyance of my life," he hurriedly exclaimed, as he took her hand.

Grace knew too well what was coming, and her frame was agitated by an unaccountable tremor at the words of her companion.

Arlington observed the change, and drew from it, at once, an augury favourable to his hopes. Poor fellow, he was doomed to inevitable disappointment.

"I see that I am already half anticipated," he continued: "bluntness, Miss Leslie, is a soldier's characteristic, and, in short, I must be pardoned if I have not on this occasion selected the most happy method of telling you that you are, that you long have been, the object of my unalterable affection!"

He fell on one knee, as he spoke, and pressed to his lips the small, fragile hand that thrilled with agitation in his own. But Grace could only turn aside her head and weep.

"I see," said Arlington, raising immediately to his feet, and relinquishing her hand, to retain which he now felt would be presumption, "my worst apprehensions are fully realized. Grace Leslie can have no other feeling than hate toward one who has fought against her country. I was mad, indeed, to believe that it could be otherwise!"

"Stay, Captain Arlington," cried Grace, seeing him about to depart, and unwilling that he should leave her thus abruptly; "that I have already bestowed my affections on another, I am free to confess; but, although I cannot return your passion, I can still esteem you as a friend."

"And do you, indeed, esteem me, then?"

"I do, from the bottom of my heart, and I

regret most deeply that circumstances should have placed you in a situation which brings you in fatal contact with those most dear to me."

"Alas! dearest Grace! for thy sake I would at once resign the most brilliant prospect that ever opened before the path of a young adventurer."

"And why not so, as it is? Why not act the generous part, confess your error, and cease to take up arms against a land which you know is already groaning beneath the oppressions of a tyrannical and exacting administration! Oh! that my woman's voice could be heard in your halls of legislation; I think that I could almost persuade myself to forego my sex, if I thought that, by so doing, I could bring success to our glorious cause!"

Arlington stood gazing upon Grace in speechless admiration, while, with form erect and flushed cheeks, she continued the glowing eulogy; in the excitement she appeared as if inspired with the spirit of prophecy. But when that excitement had passed away her cheeks resumed their wonted pallor, and her eyes once more modestly sought the ground.

Her arguments were so convincing, that Arlington dreaded to hear her speak again upon the subject; for, to say truth, they only echoed an opinion which had for some time been slumbering in his bosom.

"I should become unworthy of the name I bear, if I longer listened to such discourse!" he exclaimed, hastily; and was about turning from the spot, with a confused apology for having intruded upon her leisure to so little purpose, when a wild and hideous figure leaped the little picket which separated the garden from a narrow lane that ran beside it, and placed himself directly in the path which it was necessary for both to take to return to the dwelling.

Both Captain Arlington and Grace started back in unfeigned amazement, and well might they be held excusable; for the wretched object which met their gaze had nothing earthly in his wild appearance. Great masses of tangled, knotty hair overhung his brow, and every bit of covering was a rag. His jaws were hollow, his eyes deeply sunken in their sockets, and his cheeks, pinched from famine, while the livid hue which overspread his features suggested the idea of a corpse newly arisen from the tomb. In the surprise of the instant Arlington mechanically drew his sword, but the first words of the miserable creature immediately disarmed him.

"Food, for the sake of Jesus, food!" he howled, rather than said; and, stretching out two gaunt and wasted arms, he made an effort to approach still nearer; but fell, exhausted almost at their feet.

Grace Leslie's humanity was at once aroused

and with the speed of light she bounded towards the house, whence she was quickly seen returning, bearing in her hands the wherewithal to relieve the wants of the sufferer. Hearing her footsteps the poor fellow raised himself slightly, with Arlington's assistance; but, on seeing who it was that brought him the food, he cast her from him with all the strength that he could muster, and bounded to his feet.

"Is it you, Grace Leslie!—you, from whom I trace every misfortune that has beset my wretched life! You to whom I am indebted for a lacerated back, and sufferings worse than those which the damned are said to suffer in the world to come! Oh! you are Fortune's chosen favourite now, but for you, and for all who surround you, a day shall come, when a word in mercy from the despised RALPH OSBORNE would be a boon inestimable. Ay, tremble and turn pale! From this time forth I dedicate my life to sweet revenge. Wherever you bend your steps, my hatred shall pursue—wherever scenes of gaiety invite you, a thought of me shall check your mirth and thrill your frame with apprehension! A blight shall come on everything you touch! You shall be shunned and dreaded as a leper! My curse!—my curse."

Grace could hear no more; terror had done its work with her; a death-like swoon suspended all her faculties, and when Arlington

arrived to remove her to the mansion, he could hardly persuade himself that he did not carry in his arms a corpse.

CHAPTER V.

THE OLD PROVOST.

WEEKS fled rapidly away, and still each succeeding day found Reuben Gayler a prisoner in the old Provost. — It is almost impossible to conceive the sufferings which Reuben and his companions, the little band of patriots from the Bronx, had been compelled to undergo. Animated by his example, they had sustained an active part in the disastrous battle on Brooklyn Heights, and although many, becoming entangled with the retreating columns of the Maryland forces, in their disordered flight across the marshes of Gowanus, had perished under the guns of the foe, a small portion of their number managed to escape, only, however, to fall again into the power of the adversary.

Deprived of wholesome air, and living in continual darkness, the feelings of these wretched beings may be faintly imagined. Every day witnessed the death of one or more of their number, until, at last, only a dozen

remained to animate each other by their presence.

One morning, toward the end of December, as Reuben was lying in his straw, borne down by weakness, and racked by bodily pains, the door of the miserable cell in which he and his few remaining companions were confined, swung upon its hinges, and an English officer stepped into the loathsome place, followed by a man bearing a light, while the scarlet uniforms of a file of soldiers could be dimly detected in the passage beyond. For an instant he paused upon the threshold, as if overcome by the sight which met his gaze, but conquering his repugnance, he advanced into the centre of the cell.

"Which of you," he asked, "goes by the name of Reuben Gayler?"

Reuben, who had heretofore scarcely noticed the intrusion, supposing that he was about to be honoured by one of Cunningham's customary visits, on hearing his name pronounced for the first time in that dreary place, raised his head, which had been bowed dejectedly upon his breast, and replied:

"That name was once my own, but misery has made such havoc here, that my best friends would hardly recognise me."

"My name is Arlington," continued his visitor, "captain in his Majesty's fourth regiment of foot."

"I guessed as much," returned Reuben,

contemptuously. "You British officers are always known by your trappings."

"You mistake my motive, sir," said Arlington. "The business which brings me here is of the first importance, not merely to yourself, but to another, who takes a lively interest in your welfare. I am here at the instance of Miss Grace Leslie."

He did not dare, as yet, to expose the whole truth to Reuben, for he saw with pity the exhausted condition of his rival, and should he proceed too incautiously in his revelations, the worst of consequences might be dreaded.

At the pronunciation of that name, so hallowed in the young patriot's recollection, Reuben raised himself to a sitting posture, and eagerly scanned his visitor's face.

"She is true, then, notwithstanding all I have heard to the contrary!" he exclaimed, in an agitated voice. "But hold, forgive me, sir, if I suspect your motives wrongly, but in my dealings with my fellow-men, I have always judged it best to be fair and above board with them, and I may be excused of asking of you a similar favour. Is Miss Leslie a prisoner?"

"She is not, save of her own free will."

"Then why do I find her in contact with one wearing a uniform she has always been taught to despise? Can it be that she whom I imagined so pure, has changed?"

"Cease, my friend, to distract yourself with

idle fears. Miss Leslie is not a prisoner, neither is she a traitoress to her country. Above all—"Arlington's voice trembled slightly, as he dwelt upon the words—"above all, she has not forgotten the love which once existed between herself and a certain Reuben Gayler, whom she knew in days of yore."

"God bless you, Captain!" exclaimed Reuben, seizing Arlington by the hand, and pressing it to his lips, "your words carry consolation with them. I cannot doubt your motives any longer. But you bear a message—is it not so?"

"There is no time for the exchange of idle words," answered Arlington; "I am here for the purpose of conducting you to freedom, to the presence of her whom you so ardently love. Do you still doubt me? Behold the instrument which sets you free! After weeks of constant exertion, I have obtained from Lord Howe the order for your release."

Reuben gazed upon the faces about him with a bewildered air, and it was some time before he could sufficiently accustom himself to the light, to be able to peruse the document handed him by Captain Arlington.

At first he appeared as if overjoyed at the prospect; a thousand recollections of the past came thronging to his brain—the figure of his early love seemed beckoning him from the distance. Then he gazed upon the sallow and emaciated countenances of his fellow-sufferers,

and the smile vanished from his face, even as the bright sunbeam is obscured by the passing cloud.

"I cannot take it, Captain," and he held the parchment at arm's length for Arlington to receive it. "I am deeply conscious of the sacrifices which you must have made in my behalf; but that document mentions only a single name, and it never shall be said that Reuben Gayler, having led his comrades into difficulties, deserted them and left them to perish of famine and disease in a loathsome dungeon, for the sake of ensuring his own safety. Enough has been said upon this subject; either my fellow-prisoners must also be released, or I remain to share their fate, be it for good or evil."

"I should be guilty of an unworthy act if I withheld my admiration from the sentiments which you have just uttered," said Arlington; "but the happiness of another is involved in your fate, and if my arguments are of no avail I must introduce one who will, perhaps succeed in altering your rash determination."

At a signal from Arlington, the ranks beyond the door were seen to part—a fairy-like figure darted into the apartment, and Reuben Gayle clasped in his arms the yielding form of Grace Leslie.

"Oh! Grace, Grace!" he said, gazing upon her with a look of ardent affection. "Can you too, seek to tempt me into a measure which

can only replete dishonour on us both, and which will embitter my happiness to the last day of my existence."

"What are a thousand lives to you?" pleaded Grace through her tears. "Oh! Reuben—after many days of anxious seeking, I have at last obtained for you the inestimable boon of liberty. I am alone in the world, and am indebted to the charity of strangers—those strangers, too, our country's enemies—for a livelihood. Can you refuse at a moment like this to become my protector?"

It was a trying moment for the young patriot, and it was evident that he felt his position keenly.

Folding in his arms the form of one who was dearer to him than life itself, he gazed around once more upon the faces of his fellow-sufferers, and read, in the lines and cares which there so thickly abounded, many a tale of sorrow and privation; and, turning back to Grace, almost angelic in her pallid loveliness, he emitted a heavy groan, and allowed his head to fall upon his bosom.

In that dejected and despairing attitude, Grace read that all hope was at end.

In vain did the poor girl implore him to change his purpose.

Neither her prayers nor the urgent importunities of Captain Arlington had the effect of moving him in his determination, and after a fervent blessing, Reuben suffered Grace, who

was hardly able to stand from agitation, to be withdrawn from his reluctant arms; and so they parted.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DUNGEON.

DURING his interview with Grace, Reuben had, by a vigorous effort, managed in a great degree to control his feelings, but when the door of the dungeon closed upon her retreating footsteps, and the place had resumed its accustomed air of death-like solitude, a feeling of utter desolation came over him, and for the first time since his incarceration in the Provost he yielded himself up, unrestrainedly, to the feelings of the moment.

He thought of the peaceful little hamlet by the Bronx—of the grey-haired pastor—of Grace, and of the many happy hours he had passed at her father's hearth, and his soul sank at the magnitude of the contrast.

Not long were his thoughts of this unpromising tenor.

Most of his comrades have relapsed into their former apathy, the cell was as silent as the grave—and Reuben thought he could detect, amid this sepulchral stillness, the sound of human voices.

He listened, and the sound was repeated, with such distinctness, that, by applying his ear to one side of the wall—that nearest to the portion of the prison occupied by Cunningham—he could distinctly hear the language of the speakers.

Heaven at this moment suggested to him an idea which he lost no time in making use of.

Going round among his companions, he endeavoured to arouse their attention by telling them of what he had heard and seen.

“By every indication,” he argued, “we must be in close vicinity to the rooms of the keeper, from which our cell is divided only by a temporary partition. It would be no hard matter, I think, to remove this obstacle, and as the Provost is poorly guarded just now, and as the keeper’s rooms communicate by a broad passage with the common, we can easily make our way thither, if we have but the courage to sustain us. What do you say? Shall it be tried?”

“You forget,” replied one, “that during the time which it would be necessary to employ in removing this partition, the attention of the guard would be aroused, and, once detected in such an attempt, our death is certain.”

“You say truly,” replied Reuben, relapsing into his former dejection; “yet, stay, all hope is not yet lost. There is a certain period in

the evening, as I judge, when this room which appears, from the conversation to which I have been listening, to be a kind of a lodge or ante-room for Cunningham's subordinates, is untenanted. That hour cannot be far distant. Let us listen. If our suspicions prove correct, a few minutes' energetic labour may liberate us from our thralldom without the necessity of others' interference."

The hope diffused among the wretched inmates of the cell by the words of Reuben had an astonishing effect upon their wasted frames; they seemed animated by a new vigour, and to Reuben the dungeon was no longer gloomy as before.

Not a word was said; but, applying their ears to the partition, they listened intently to catch the sound of retreating footsteps, which would be to them the signal for the commencement of operations.

All night they listened, but no opportunity offered.

Days passed away; the hopes inspired by Reuben's conversation were once more growing dim; when, at length, just as they were abandoning the project as impracticable, Reuben had unmistakable indications afforded him that the coast was clear for his proposed operations.

The iron-bound benches of the cell were quickly torn from their fastenings, and men

who had seemed, but a few moments before, devoid of every appliance, found of a sudden instruments sufficiently sharp and heavy to carry out their long-anticipated design.

To remove the plastering, to tear away the decayed laths, was the work of a few minutes, and Reuben and his companions, astonished, as they well might be, at their success, found themselves the sole occupants of a comfortable apartment, heretofore devoted to the officers of the Provost.

At the rear of the room was a window, and on the walls were hanging a variety of cloaks and other garments, which the prisoners, under the circumstances, felt fully justified in appropriating to themselves.

Immediately beneath the corridor already mentioned, lay the yard, or area of the jail, separated from the common by a high board fence.

It was night, and, fortunately for the fugitives, a storm appeared to be impending, for the sky was veiled by clouds, and the moon only peered at intervals through the flying mists.

Everything seemed to favour the plot. To unbar the casement, to let themselves drop into the yard, to scale the fence, was a work quickly accomplished.

The place was deemed so secure, that Cunningham had, at this time, placed no sentries outside the walls, and thus every

obstacle which had presented itself, was removed.

While Cunningham and his minions were hobnobbing it over their wine, Reuben Gayler and his comrades were rapidly putting a barrier between themselves and their late masters.

Disguised in a common cloak and slouching hat, which he had found among the contents of the room he had lately left, Reuben immediately took his way toward the Battery. As he approached it, his ears were attracted by the sounds of revelry, and looking up at the Governor's house, he observed that the windows were brilliantly illuminated, while the jarring sound which always accompanies such an occasion, left no room for doubt that a ball was going on.

He would have given worlds at this moment to have attracted the attention of Grace; but, even while he was contemplating the means of obtaining an interview without perilling his person, a hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a rough voice saluted him.

"Fine doings, neighbour, for you and I to witness, yet not partake of," said the new comer, in a tone which seemed as if the speaker at once solicited and imparted information.

Reuben turned suddenly round, and an exclamation burst from both their lips, as they confronted each other.

"Ralph Osborne!" cried Reuben, shrinking back as he made the discovery.

"Of all whom I thought to meet, you are the last," said Osborne, trying to conquer his surprise, and as Reuben's eye, aided by the reflection of the light from the windows of the mansion, rapidly scanned the other's person, he saw at a glance the result of Osborne's apostacy to his country.

"You have not fared over well, friend Osborne, since we last met," exclaimed Reuben, with a slight touch of irony in his voice and manner. "Have the king's servants proved ungrateful, and refused to acknowledge your distinguished merits, that I see you in this sorry plight?"

"Come, come, master Reuben," replied Osborne, sulkily, his choler rising as he recalled the ignominious treatment which he had undergone. "I have erred, and bitter experience has taught me the virtue of repentance. I am no longer a king's trooper; for a time, it is true, I was dazzled by the glitter of a handful of British gold, but the hallucination passed, and I am now anxious—nay, eager to serve my country."

Reuben looked at him snarply, to see if he was jesting; but Osborne's appearance was so dilapidated and woe-begone, and his face wore such a repentant aspect, that Reuben could no longer doubt him, and when he again spoke to Osborne it was with less asperity than before.

"And you are really sincere in this?" he asked.

"May I perish on the spot," began Osborne,

"The oath," replied Reuben, "is unnecessary. Although, at first, I could not avoid harbouring a doubt, your present appearance goes far towards convincing me."

The two, hereupon, entered upon a long conversation, in the course of which Osborne so represented Grace in the eyes of her lover, that Reuben almost came to the determination of surrendering himself to the Provost-Marshal once more; but there was still a doubt.

"Can it be possible?" said Reuben dejectedly; "can Grace Leslie, whom I thought pure and unsullied as an angel, participate in the gaieties of a ball-room for the sake of pleasing Arlington, while I am supposed to be breathing my last in a crowded and noisome dungeon?"

He little knew that Grace had more than once deprived herself of rest, that she might pass a night under the frowning walls of his place of confinement, glad to be near him even though he knew it not. In the midst of his reflections, the voice of Osborne again interrupted him.

"Let us make our way into the garden," he whispered; "if we were to be discovered here, the result might not be a pleasant one to either of us."

Reuben concurred in the suggestion, hoping

that it might lead to a rencontre between himself and Grace, and together they both bent their steps towards the seaside; Reuben framing a course of conduct to pursue in case of a meeting, and Osborne quietly gloating over his anticipated revenge.

More than once he felt tempted to stab his companion to the heart, as he unsuspectingly walked before him, but there were too many risks to be encountered, and he therefore put up the weapon which he had half drawn, determining to postpone that pleasure to a more fitting time.

"He we are," said Osborne; "and as it will not answer for me to be seen lurking about the premises, I will remain here and keep watch for you."

"Very well," replied Reuben; "I shall not detain you long; and as he leaped the paling which divided the garden from the adjoining space, Osborne turned rapidly upon his heel, and walked away in the direction of the barracks. When he arrived there, all was, of course, commotion, on account of the recent escape, and when Osborne made his appearance, they came very near hanging him, as some atonement for their loss.

"Is this the thanks one gets for doing you a service?" said Osborne, angrily. "I came for the purpose of assisting you to recover the ringleader in this proceeding; but, if you will not vouchsafe me fair treatment, I will e'en go

back to whence I came, and keep my knowledge for those that deserve it better."

"Well, and how much must we pay you for your information? for of course you do not *give* us the benefit of your knowledge!" the officer in command asked of Osborne, in a sneering tone, which evinced the utter contempt with which he regarded him.

"You are right, lieutenant; one makes nothing in this world by giving; I shall therefore charge you a crown for the trouble I am about to take in your behalf!"

"A modest demand that!" said the other, turning to his brother officers, with a laugh. "But I suppose there is no help for us; so here, fellow, is your silver, and now we are at your disposal."

"Let us away, then, or the bird may escape;" and, with these words, Osborne passed from the barracks, followed by an officer, and a file of men selected for the purpose, and took his way, as rapidly as he might, towards the spot where he had parted with the unsuspecting object of his hatred.

In the meantime, Reuben, finding by observation that the attention of the inmates of the Governor's mansion was concentrated in that portion of the domicile in which the festivities were going forward, stole unperceived toward the open door of the hall, and was on the point of entering at all hazards, when a female figure, clad in black, swept past him.

She paused, and was on the point of making an outcry, when a single word from the intruder caused her to forego the intention, and throw herself upon his breast.

For an instant, Reuben allowed his long pent-up emotions full sway, forgetful of the dark insinuations of Osborne.

But suddenly a thought flashed upon him, and he relinquished the fragile waist of the lovely being before him, to gaze upon her with looks of distrust and suspicion.

Utterly unable to comprehend the meaning of this rapid change, Grace returned his glance with one of silent wonder.

"Forgive me, Grace," said Reuben, "if I wrong you; but this scene of revelry and mirth accords not with our mutual circumstances, and I fear that even your heart has not been able to resist the fascinations of a scarlet coat and glittering epaulettes."

"I do not understand," replied Grace, with an air of bewilderment. "You are jesting, surely."

"A sorry subject for a jest," he rejoined, seriously. "Hearts now-a-days are merely toys, it seems, and I was foolish to imagine that I had found an exception to the rule."

"Great Heaven! what horrible words are these?" cried Grace, upon whom the meaning of her lover was just beginning to dawn. "Reuben, was it for this I laboured to restore you to the light? for this?"

"Grace Leslie, hear me! How true the tale may be I know not; but it is said that a certain Captain Arlington has been far more intimate with yourself than comports either with your own honour, or my happiness. This dreadful doubt, which seems to have some foundation in truth, must be cleared up, so that not a taint of suspicion may rest upon you, or henceforth and for ever we are strangers!"

"I see it all," cried Grace; "but it is not too late, thank Heaven, to vindicate myself. Captain Arlington is a man of honour, whatever may be the circumstances under which he is placed. He will at once clear up the mystery."

"It is highly improbable that one holding a position so enviable as that of Captain Arlington would render an account of his actions at the demand of a despised Continental!" said Reuben, with a sarcastic smile.

"He will not be convinced," cried Grace, wringing her hands, in despair of overcoming her lover's suspicions. "Heaven be my witness, foundation for this rumour there is none. And yet with nothing upon which to base your distrust more reliable than the unsupported assertions of an utter stranger, you, whom I have loved so fondly and so well, deny me a privilege that is not refused the culprit at the bar—the right of self-defence."

"I cannot doubt you, Grace—and yet, your

presence here, and Arlington's evident familiarity! What would I not sacrifice to have these fears for ever set at rest."

"At least," she said, "you cannot choose but hear me."

And in as brief and concise a manner as she could, Grace narrated to her lover all that had befallen her since her seizure by the villain Osborne, and the destruction of her family and home.

The most prejudiced sceptic could not withhold his belief from Grace, whose artless but earnest manner was an evidence of her truth.

Long ere she concluded, Reuben had pressed her once more earnestly to his heart, and owned that he had wronged her.

At this crisis of affairs a drum was suddenly heard to roll without, and Grace emitted a piercing cry, as she found her lover surrounded by a band of soldiery, whose object was evidently to take him into custody.

No ray of hope appeared, until Arlington, advancing into the garden, bade the officer to release his prisoner, and tendered him the order for his discharge!

CHAPTER VII.

THE BRANDYWINE.

THE scene of our narrative has changed to the banks of the Brandywine.

It is midsummer, and the sun hangs in the cloudless sky above, like an enormous globe of burnished gold.

The foliage of the trees is dark and luxuriant and bends the boughs so close to the water's edge, that the leaves in many places touch the cooling stream, creating a shadow that strongly invites the observer to a bath.

And from underneath the sea of leaves and vines in which it is embedded, the white walls of a low, wood-blinded cottage are plainly perceptible.

Surrounding the cottage are fields overflowing with agricultural wealth, but not a solitary spout is visible among them.

All is silent and deserted; even the chimneys of the husbandmen, whose dwellings may be seen on every side, fail to send forth the accustomed smoke, telling of the good cheer that might be had within.

About ten o'clock on a morning in July as fresh as we have just described, this li-

hamlet on the banks of the Brandywine became suddenly converted from a deserted village, into a scene of the greatest animation—exhibiting all the evidences of a hasty and disordered flight.

First came a body of horseman, covered with dust and begrimed with powder; then followed several cannon, bearing every indication of having been used in some recent engagement between two powerful opposing forces.

A group of general officers, surrounded by their staff, next made their appearance, followed by a number of waggons, bearing the wounded

These were the scattered remnants of the American forces which had just received, under Washington, so signal a defeat upon the banks of the Brandywine.

As this disordered body rode into the little hamlet, a lovely girl just emerged from the picturesque cottage alluded to, and gazed with anxiety at the group of officers who were approaching.

As she made her appearance a young lieutenant who rode among the staff wheeled his horse out of the road, and turned towards the cottage, where, when he had arrived, he dismounted, and followed her within.

“Heaven be praised, that has carried you, dearest Reuben, thus far in safety through a dangerous campaign,” was her salutation, as she submitted to the embrace which Reuben

Gayler—advanced to the rank of an aid to the commander-in-chief—had cast around him “When I heard the roaring of your cannon my heart sank within me with apprehension. All is lost, then?”

“Not while there lives a Washington to direct our cause,” replied Reuben, warmly. “We have sustained a defeat, it is true, but all have not perished, and thousands will ere long throng to take the places of those who have fallen. Has not France sent us Lafayette, to stimulate our soldiers to exertion by his chivalrous deeds? And with such incentives to perseverance, is it probable that Americans will despair? Their conduct hitherto, forbids the thought.”

“But you will surely remain a little while with us?”

“Long enough to recruit our weakened forces,” he replied; “for now we have hardly what may be called an army. But I have a favour to ask, which I hope my Grace will not refuse me.”

“Can I refuse you anything in reason,” she returned reproachfully.

“Briefly then, the fortune of war has placed in my keeping as a captive one whom I fear would serve, were it only in atonement for the benefits which I have received at his hands and for the unjust suspicions which I once persisted in fastening upon him.”

“Do you speak of Captain Arlington?”

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"The same. Wounded in the thickest of the fight, he fell almost at my feet, and common humanity should alone have prompted me to the course which I have taken. I gave him in charge of a competent surgeon, who has dressed his wounds, and only requires for him a refuge where he may receive better attention than can be found in a crowded hospital. With your consent, therefore, I will make you his nurse, and will visit him as often as I can find relief from my duties."

"Your will is always my law," answered Grace, gently, "and in this instance I have a double motive for doing as you dictate. Captain Arlington will find in me a sister."

No more was said upon this subject, but, as soon as practicable, the wounded man, unconscious of his benefactor, was removed from the crowded vehicle which had brought him thither, and placed in comfortable quarters within the cottage.

As soon as Rueben became convinced of this fact, he left him in the care of the willing Grace and departed to look after his manifold duties.

It was nightfall as Gayler turned from the gateway of the little cottage, whither Grace had followed him, in the fulness of her affection, reluctant to have him go; but the moon was shining brightly, except when obscured at intervals by a passing cloud, and although the road the young officer had to follow was a

lonely one, he had no thought of danger and did not take any unusual precaution to avoid it.

He had just entered a patch of woods, not more than a mile distant from the scene of his parting interview with Grace when he became conscious that he was followed, and ere he could find time to question the intruder, some one sprang with the rapidity of a panther, from the thicket which lined the path on either side, and Reuben caught the glint of a blade, which the next instant pierced his shoulder, deluging his uniform with blood.

With equal alacrity he grasped the assailant by the throat and succeeded, after a fierce struggle, in depriving him of the instrument.

Finding himself worsted, the ruffian, by a dexterous movement, freed himself from Reuben's grasp, and took to the thicket again, exclaiming ere he vanished from Reuben's sight:

"This is *your* hour of triumph! the next mine!"

CHAPTER VIII.

UNDER THE HONEYSUCKLES.

A spot more lovely than that which Grace had selected for her abode, could hardly be imagined.

It was replete with every charm that can be crowded together in so small a space.

Thick clusters of the honeysuckle and eglantine overran the small but comfortable cottage, the windows of which looked out on a garden profuse in floral ornament, and upon the placid waters of the romantic Brandywine, stretching as far as the eye could reach, beyond.

But a new charm, and a brighter one by far, was now added to those with which nature in one of her most pleasant moods had invested the spot.

Through the influence of Lady Arlington, which was almost unbounded, Grace had obtained full restitution for the losses which she had suffered, and the privations she had undergone, and she had concluded to cast her future lot among some relatives of her mother, whose family had for several generations been the sole proprietors of the spot.

The war, she trusted, would soon be at an

end, for measures of conciliation were already talked of; and Reuben had promised, should his life be spared, to settle permanently among her kin, and devote the remainder of his existence to her service.

The intense anxiety with which she perused each succeeding Gazette, announcing battles lost and victories won, may be easily conceived by such as have experienced similar sensations.

The triumphs of Washington animated her with confidence and hope, while those of the enemy made her tremble for the ultimate fate of her country.

She often saw her lover's name mentioned with honour, and this only served to increase and strengthen her affection.

As for Arlington, she thought of him less, it is true, but as one who had performed so many acts of kindness in her behalf, she could not but regard him with gratitude and esteem.

Only a few months had rolled by since Grace had bidden adieu to Reuben at New York; he to volunteer his services once more in the ranks of his countrymen, and she to repair to the spot which had been decided upon as her future abiding place.

During that time many changes of high importance to the nation had taken place; the battles of Trenton and Princeton had been fought, and the name of George Washington rang in every mouth, and was even mentioned

with respect by the most determined of his enemies.

Such was the aspect of affairs when the famous battle of Brandywine, at which the young and generous Marquis de Lafayette won his first laurels as a warrior, gave a temporary check to the American arms, and caused a cloud to lower over the country's prospects.

But her lover had escaped from the conflict free from scathe, and his ardent and glowing language gave Grace renewed hope for the future.

Blest by his society, she was content to find happiness in the present, and all else was, for the time being, forgotten.

For many days subsequent to his removal to Grace's dwelling—occupied only by herself and a plain, painstaking farmer, with only his wife beside for a companion—Captain Arlington lingered upon the confines of the cave.

His wound had been of so serious a nature, that the surgeon who had attended him had given over all hopes of his recovery; but a comfortable apartment and unremitting attention on the part of Grace and her relatives, soon brought about a favourable change in his condition.

In the meanwhile, Grace had spent all that portion of her time not devoted to her patient, in the society of Reuben, whose visits enhanced

the delights of a home that was already an earthly paradise to her.

It was one pleasant summer's mornin when Arlington first awoke to the consciousness of his situation, and a knowledge of the sorrow from which he had received assistance.

The sunlight was pouring through the half-opened window into the apartment in which he lay, disclosing beyond faint glimpses of landscape, such as artists delight to picture and poets are wont to image in their dreams.

But by far the loveliest object which met his gaze was the fragile figure of a girl of seventeen, who sat close by the latticed casement bending over her needlework, while the sun poured full upon her exquisitely rounded form, lit up with tints of gold her chestnut hair, and enveloped her in a kind of glory, so that she more resembled one of those creations which we see depicted in the works of ancient masters, than a being of mortal birth.

It took all of Arlington's strength to raise himself on his elbow, and for nearly an hour he continued to gaze upon her, drinking rich draughts of beauty, such as he thought he ne'er had gazed upon, and yielding to visions of earthly happiness, which were most too transcendent to be realized.

A deep sigh from the convalescent attracted the attention of the fair object of his thoughts, and Grace, turning toward her patient, uttered an exclamation of surprise and alarm, when

the captain, on his part, was not less astonished to find himself under the charge of Grace, whom he had supposed to be miles away.

"There is no occasion for this alarm, my dear Miss Grace," said Arlington, observing her alarm, and thinking only of the elysium in which he had been basking. "I am doing well enough, I assure you, and beg that you will not pause in your employment on my account. I shall be perfectly content if you will suffer me to remain as I am."

"And relapse again into your former state, as you assuredly will, if you persist in thus overtaking your powers," returned Grace, resolutely, and going to his side.

"Believe me, I am getting strong again—indeed, my pain has entirely left me," added Arlington, but almost as the words escaped his lips, he was struck with a convincing proof of his inefficiency. The excitement which had produced so rapid a revulsion in his feelings had subsided, and with it the momentary power which it had produced. He strove to rally against the weakness, but in vain; a sudden pain oppressed him, and he sank backward, with a groan, upon his pillow. Grace instantly tendered some restoratives, and after some minutes he again sufficiently recovered himself to be able to converse—contrary to the express injunctions of his lovely nurse.

"I must have been very ill," he said, as soon as he regained his voice; "I can remem-

ber being severely wounded in the chest, but how, or where, is a profound mystery to me."

"You received your wound," she replied "at the battle of Brandywine, where you behaved, as I have been told, bravely and well. Had it not been for Reuben Gayler, who took you prisoner, I might not now have the pleasure of officiating as your nurse."

"It is a pleasure, then?" asked the captain with a latent hope.

Grace coloured and looked down, not knowing what to say, when Arlington saved her the trouble of speaking, and relieved the embarrassment under which she was evidently labouring.

"Forgive me, Miss Grace," he said; "I did not think when I spoke; it is an indelicate subject, and I will take care that it is not again touched upon by me. Would that I had been left to perish upon the field when so many of my brave comrades left their duels before me. I had then spared you the mortification, and myself an additional pang."

"You are wrong to speak thus, Captain Arlington; indeed, you are," she replied, with tears in her eyes; "you are now exhausted from the effects of your illness, and hardly know what you say. You will soon recover from your present prostration, and will learn to conquer feelings which you are aware cannot longer be encouraged with safety to yourself. Besides, they might lead to a difference between yourself and—and another, and, as

friend to both, I could wish so sad a mishap avoided. Take what repose you may; for you are getting momentarily more weak, and before the day expires I will revisit you."

He would have interposed to stay her—he would have promised not to utter another syllable for the remainder of the day for the sake of knowing that he was in her company, still gently watched by her; but ere he could articulate a word, she had vanished, and the high-heeled shoes of her aunt, which were shortly after heard upon the stairs, took from him all disposition for conversation.

He soon fell into a refreshing slumber, from which he did not awake until early on the following morning; but Grace was not sitting as usual by his bedside, and the chamber seemed dull and dreary without her presence.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CAMP.

It was a goodly sight for the eye to rest upon, in those days of republican simplicity and contention, the camp of the American army upon the Brandywine.

Although less brilliant, perhaps, than that which the British army would have offered

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under similar circumstances, the *coup d'œil* was a not less imposing one.

The principal division had placed itself in a large field situated upon the banks of the river, about a mile distant from Grace's dwelling, while that to which Lafayette was, for the time being, attached, occupied a field of lesser dimensions adjoining it.

In various positions on either side were the other portions of the little army, whose numbers, though comparatively insignificant, were sufficient to afford the British generals, who had hitherto anticipated an easy conquest, no small degree of anxiety.

The forces of the latter, commanded by Howe, were pressing on towards Philadelphia, which was already fairly in their power; but, it was not the intention of Washington to allow them to retain possession of that city without a struggle, and he was merely recruiting his forces, in order to prepare them for the task which lay before them, and upon which all were willing and eager to enter.

The adventure of Reuben Gayler had naturally created much excitement among his comrades, and the country was scoured in all directions, as far as comported with their safety, by parties of armed horsemen, with a view of detecting the assassin.

Their exertions, however, were unavailing; not having been able to discern the ruffian's countenance, owing to the darkness of the night,

and the rapidity of the transaction, Reuben could not give a description of him, and of course, although several arrests had been made, the persons suspected were discharged for want of evidence to criminate them.

Had Reuben disclosed the matter to Grace, she might have given him a clue which would have led to the desired result; but, fearing to alarm her by unnecessary fears, and firmly believing that he had been mistaking for another, he hesitated to reveal what had befallen him, and thus the subject passed over, and was suffered gradually to drop.

At the time of these proceedings, the whole country was infested by bands of desperate and unprincipled wretches, who, having no particular bias in favour of either side, ravaged the rural districts, plundering and pillaging wherever they turned their steps—sometimes burning the houses of those to whom they chanced to take a dislike, and performing other outrages, with the recital of which we hesitate to sully our pages.

In the midst of a lonely and desolate moor not far from the scene of the foregoing occurrences, was situated a hut, which, probably from its solitary situation, and the fact that a murder had once been perpetrated within it, had long had the reputation of being *haunted*.

Strange cries and fiendish noises were asserted, by the peasantry who resided in the vicinity, to issue from it throughout the live-

long night, and unnatural lights glimmered through every nook and cranny of the old rookery, giving it the appearance of a living furnace.

One or two, more reckless, or more foolhardy than the rest, had sought to penetrate its mysteries; but they had never been seen again; and thus the place had grown to be shunned and avoided, until, at last, it was declared a haunted spot.

On a wild and tempestuous evening in October, when the sky is overcast by threatening and angry clouds, and the forest paths are strewn with faded leaves, a poor wretch, with hardly sufficient clothing to disguise his nakedness, shivering from cold, and pinched with famine, turned his steps in the direction of this same hovel we have been describing.

He had been to a neighbouring hamlet, craving alms; but the war had hardened the hearts of men, even as it had changed the aspect of their fields, and wheresoever he bent his steps, he met with a chilling rebuff.

Refused the means of prolonging life, the wretch was about turning his steps towards the fields with the view of giving himself up to death, when a careless publican jokingly advised him to apply at the lone house on the moor, where, he was told, he was certain of finding accommodation.

Reckless of consequences, the beggar took his way towards the haunted spot.

As he approached it, he found it brilliantly lighted up, while from within there issued a series of sounds that might well have given it a supernatural reputation.

The noises which issued from it, however, had to a practised ear the sound of bacchanalian rejoicings, rather than anything else, and did not deter the wanderer from approaching.

He had not gone far, when an athletic form sprang as it were out of the ground directly before him, and in rude voice demanded his object.

"Do you know," he asked, "the nature of the place you are about to visit?"

"I know not," replied the outcast; "neither do I care; I am alone in the world, penniless, without a friend; famishing, almost, for want of a crust."

"If this be so, why did you not ask for succour at the village?" inquired the other, eyeing him suspiciously through a mask, which he wore for the purpose of avoiding recognition.

"Would you mock me?" returned the outcast. "Have you not lived long enough in the world to know that it has no pity for the unfortunate?"

"You have tried the experiment then?"

"If begging one's bread from door to door be a degradation, then am I one of the lowest of human beings."

"You would work, then, if a chance were afforded you?"

"Work! ay, till I could work no longer!"

"Hark ye, my lad, art particular as to the nature of the employment?"

"I am indifferent to everything. I ask only food, and a place whereon to repose my head. For this I will do anything, for conscience and I have long since parted company."

"Come, then, with me," said the unknown, taking him by the hand as he spoke. "You may, or may not be sincere. If you are, you shall be regaled upon the best that the land affords; but, if evil your intent, remember that a power greater than that of the law itself surrounds you, to escape from which were impossible; and remember, also, that more than one adventurous wretch, whose sole offence was the desire to make himself acquainted with our secrets, has fallen a victim to his rashness. Come, for now there is no retreating."

"Retreat is out of my thought," replied the outcast, with a contemptuous laugh; "I have already steeped myself in guilt, and reck not what may be the nature of your calling. Henceforward, I am with you, heart and hand!"

The other grasped his hand with a firmer pressure, and both hastened on until they had approached within a few yards of the hovel, when they were again challenged, as before.

Upon a certain reply being made by the

man in the mask the questioner instantly disappeared, and they found themselves at the door of the hovel, which opened to them immediately upon a given signal.

The stranger found himself, by this means, in the centre of a bacchanalian confusion.

A huge fire was crackling and blazing in the immense chimney place, before which were seated at least twenty ruffianly looking fellows, at a long wooden table, laden with articles of food of various descriptions.

A young porker was steaming upon a huge platter in the centre, flanked by meats and vegetables of various kinds, and this, with the addition of a keg of brandy which stood beside, formed the chief feature of this Epicurean repast.

The costume of this noisy assemblage was of so multifarious a nature, that it would have puzzled many an old clothes dealer of the present generation.

Some were clad in farmers' holiday suits, and had quite a jaunty appearance, with the exception of their faces, which were masked, and therefore undiscernible.

Others affected a penchant for military attire, and, to show their neutrality, wore a dress compounded equally of the Continental and British uniforms.

He who sat at the head of the table, on a seat elevated some feet above the rest, was a gaunt, burly ruffian, dressed in the combined

costumes of an English and an American officer, while, for want of something more appropriate, his head was surmounted by a cocked hat, from which protruded a long, straight, black feather, or *pompon*, which had the effect of adding several inches to his height.

This worthy held in his right hand an enormous sword, while his left brandished a pipe, which he stretched over the assemblage like a wand, whenever he spoke.

Some were seated upon the heads of upturned barrels, others had boxes for seats, while one or two were compelled to sit upon the table itself.

Innumerable cobwebs depended from the ceiling, and the wind, roaring and whistling through every cranny in the old rookery, made a harsh, discordant sound, which added materially to the uproar which prevailed.

"What makes Black Jack so late to-night?" quoth he who appeared to act as chief over this violent assemblage.

"Don't you see I bring with me a friend?" replied the new comer; "one who will do us good service, unless I am much mistaken in my man. Look at him, lads! Saw ye ever such a scarecrow?"

And with one powerful effort of his hand he whirled the outcast around, so that his person became fully visible to all—at which a roar of

laughter arose, that made the place fairly ring again.

"Scarecrow, or not," rejoined the outcast, angrily; "I have seen the day when I could turn the stoutest of you around my finger with scarcely an effort. You laugh, but it is true, as little as I seem capable now of such a feat. But I came not here to boast, nor to be your jest. I am in want, as you may see, and I ask no greater boon than to be admitted among your number."

"How do we know that you will serve us truly?" asked the chief of the outlaws, scanning him with a suspicious eye.

"I have no present means of proving my sincerity," was the reply; "but these are times of trouble and excitement, and I may not be long without an opportunity. Society has driven me forth to die; must I meet with a like fate from you?"

"You speak us fairly," returned the chief, "and I see no reason to doubt your word. Black Jack will show you the fate of those who have sought to betray our secrets; if, after that, you are willing to join our band, we are equally willing to receive you as a brother; but should you betray any signs of fear or trepidation, be sure that the same doom is in store for yourself. Ho! Jack—idle vagabond that you are! show the stranger our *treasury* forthwith!"

The alacrity with which Jack set about

obeying the commands of his leader, showed the awe which he entertained towards that redoubtable personage.

"Say not a word," he whispered to the outcast, as they left the apartment, "and you are safe; but do anything to show that you are afraid, and you are lost beyond redemption! Trust in me, for I am your friend."

After descending through a winding passage some twenty steps, they entered a vault, the atmosphere of which was so damp that it struck a chill to the bones of the outcast; but not a single shiver passed over him.

Their way was lighted by a torch, which Black Jack had brought along, and when they had reached the midst of the vault they stopped.

Two holes attracted their attention.

Black Jack paused at the first one, and bade his companion look within.

He did so, and his breath came thick and fast, as he saw that it was filled with massive plate, and with gold and silver articles of various kinds.

"Let us now examine the next," said Black Jack, conducting him a few steps farther.

The outcast gazed into the second pit, and a thrill of horror came over him, as he caught the sight of a mass of mangled bodies, from which the blood was still flowing.

Overcome by the odours of the place, he started involuntarily back, and as he did so,

he saw the hand of the outlaw uplifted above him, bearing a spade, which in an instant more would have descended; but, with the strength of desperation, he turned and grasped the other by the throat, and held him suspended above the pit which had so nearly become his own grave.

RALPH OSBORNE had again escaped death by a single hair.

CHAPTER X.

THE VIPER.

THE recovery of Captain Arlington, from the hour of his last interview with Grace, was so rapid as to be surprising.

He suffered no relapses, and in a few weeks had gained so much strength, as to be able to walk about his room with the assistance of a crutch.

In a week more, he was sufficiently advanced to take a stroll in the garden, with grace for a companion—a happiness which he had longed for, but hardly expected to enjoy.

Day by day, as he gazed upon her unfolding beauties, he felt the promptings of love becoming stronger within him, until, at last, he made no efforts to conquer the passion

which swayed him, but surrendered himself entirely to its power.

In the meantime, the subject of Reuben's singular adventure was gradually forgotten; divided between his attentions to Grace and the arduous duties of the camp, he totally overlooked the circumstance, and matters were thus situated, when preparations were set on foot for the removal of the army.

Reuben was busied one morning in completing his own arrangements for the departure, when a messenger entered his tent, bringing a note, which had been found by one of the sentinels on the ground, close to the outskirts of the camp. It was written in an unknown hand, and ran in these words:—

“You deem yourself secure, but you are not so. The viper, warmed into a new existence, is about to sting the breast that gave it shelter. Beware of Arlington! beware of Grace! Have a wary eye upon both, and do not be too easily persuaded!”

This mysterious missive was signed—“A FRIEND;” but Reuben had had enough of jealousy, and he immediately hastened to Grace, for the purpose of laying it before her.

She was walking in the garden with Arlington, when he approached her, and for an instant a jealous pang shot across his breast; he quickly repelled the fear, and as he came up with them, said in a jesting tone, while he handed the letter to Grace for perusal:

"Here is a *billet doux* with which I have been favoured; is it not sufficient to make one jealous?"

Grace handed it in turn to Captain Arlington, and answered with a laugh:

"And do you *not* feel jealous, Master Reuben?—do you forget a certain scene which took place in New York not *lang syne*, when a certain lady, who shall be nameless, was the heroine, and a certain gallant officer the hero?"

"Thanks to your own candid nature, which sets all suspicion at defiance, I have long since conquered that ridiculous propensity," he answered lightly. "But what thinks Captain Arlington of so important a document?"

"It is plain, friend Reuben, that you have an enemy somewhere," returned Arlington. "Can you not call to mind some circumstance that may afford a clue to this little mystery?"

"It is impossible," replied Reuben; "I am not aware of having given offence to any one. Yet, stay! but no—he dared not do as much!"

Arlington asked, "*Who* dares not?" but Grace said nothing, she knew too well who was the object of her lover's thoughts.

"Oh! 'tis nothing—passing thought," returned Reuben, lightly. "And yet, the singular affair which so closely involved my life on a recent occasion—"

"Your life," cried Grace, with a look of alarm. "Was there a secret with which you feared to entrust *me*?"

"Forgive me, dearest Grace, but my motive was a good one, although now it appears that I erred." And he proceeded to tell of the attack on his life, and his escape.

"It is Osborne," said Grace, with a look of terror; "it can be no other. His oath—that fatal oath!—ah! I recall it now; it was too deeply meant!"

"Calm yourself, dearest Grace; believe me, these fears are idle. To-morrow I will take measures to ensure the apprehension of the villain, whoever he may be. And now, good-night! I have much to do ere daylight comes again, and Washington is particular. Captain Arlington, I give you my hand; I believe you to be a man of honour, and as such I am proud of your friendship, even though our destinies have been cast so widely asunder."

"Sir," rejoined Arlington, "you are a gentleman and a soldier, and I cannot but regret that you have devoted your talents to so mistaken a cause. Farewell!"

And speaking thus, they parted.

We must now return to Ralph Osborne and his new-found associates.

Osborne's career had been that of many who had pursued a similar course.

Going from one vice to another, he had plunged deeper and deeper into iniquity, until

at last honest men shunned him as a pestilence, and society refused any longer to receive him as its own.

Then came that desperate resolve which we have so recently seen him attempt to execute.

But a higher power than man's interposed to thwart his intentions.

On the night on which Reuben had been attacked, Osborne had gone forth with the desperate purpose of robbing the first person whom he might chance to meet.

Accident threw in his way Reuben Gayler, and it was not until they had clenched, and he had recognized the voice of the latter, that he knew his old enemy and rival.

Lucky for Reuben was it that he possessed the greater strength, or a far more different result might have attended the meeting.

After the scene which had occurred between himself and the outlaw, Black Jack, in the vaults of the old house on the moor, Osborne expected to encounter the signal vengeance of the disorderly crew among whom he had so unexpectedly been cast; but, to his astonishment, they applauded him for his courage, laughed at Black Jack for his clumsiness, and gave the hero of the adventure a prominent seat at the well-filled board.

How rapidly the food disappeared beneath the ravenous jaws of Osborne, it matters not to relate.

Suffice it that, after gorging himself with food until his eyes were nearly protruding from their sockets, he took to the brandy, joined in the wild revelry of the bacchanals, who, by the way, had removed their masks, and finally rolled on the floor in a fit of beastly intoxication; a denouement which gave the ruffians a still higher idea of his capacities, and he became thenceforth established as one of the foremost ringleaders of the gang.

On the next day, Osborne, after having recovered from the effects of the previous night's orgies, began to revolve in his mind some plan for the consummation of his villanous intentions with regard to Grace Leslie.

Then, by degrees, as he reflected, the recollection of the riches which had been shown to him, crept into his mind, and he thought what a fine thing it would be if he could, by some adventure, possess himself of all this wealth, and, taking forcible possession of Grace, convey her away to some far distant clime, where she would be taught to forget the troubles through which she had passed, and the breath of suspicion be for ever silenced.

Such was the nature of Osborne's meditations, when he received a strange disciple in the person of his captain.

Having wandered one morning to a solitary spot at some distance from the stronghold, the latter began the subject by sounding him as to

his idea of the kind of life which they led, and his aspirations with regard to the future.

"A free life and a merry one," replied Osborne, "that is my great desire. Give me plenty of money, plenty of fine companions, and a long life to enjoy them, and I am content."

"You are easily pleased, at any rate. But did no thought of wealth and splendour ever cross your mind; have you never had ambition to become a powerful member of that society that has oppressed and degraded you; to wring men's hearts, as they have wrung yours before now?"

"Ay! that would, indeed, be worth living for," answered Osborne, eyeing the other warily.

"To be sure; and who is better fitted to enjoy such an existence than you?"

"Is this some scheme of yours to entrap me?" asked Osborne, glowingly.

"Hark you, comrade," rejoined the outlaw, "this is palavering to no purpose. I may as well be frank with you, because, to tell the truth, you are in my power, and it matters not to me in what light you may receive my disclosures. Last night, in your dreams, you made use of certain expressions, which testified but too plainly that you had already become wearied with the sort of life we lead."

"Nay—don't frown, and fumble for your knife!"

"I approve of your sentiments rather than discountenance them, and having brought my mind to a similar conclusion, I have sought this opportunity of consulting with you on the subject.

"You have said that I am in your power; suppose that I were to betray this conversation to our comrades!"

"They'd laugh at your pains."

"That's probable, I admit. But proceed; you have not yet said all."

"I propose, then," said the other, in a low tone, "that on some night when a favourable opportunity seems to offer, we leave our brother drones to take charge of the old hive and appropriate to ourselves those certain baubles of gold and silver which our friend Black Jack was so kind as to show you on the night of your initiation into our mysteries. Once in possession of them, we can easily make our way to some distant port; our comrades, fearful of the law, and penniless, will not dare to follow us; with stylish clothes and clean faces we can mingle with the world without a fear of being detected, and thus once enjoy its pleasures, and perfect our little scheme of retaliation. What say you?"

"Well conceived," replied Osborne, thoughtfully. "You have only given words to an idea that has long been slumbering in my own breast, but which it would have been impossible for me to accomplish without your assistance."

But there must be still another participant in our contemplated flight."

"How? another?"

"Yes—a woman!"

"Ah! I see—sly dog?"

"I do not mean one of your common kind," pursued Osborne, "for the person of whom I speak, is as far removed above my degraded sphere as the sun is from the earth it illuminates."

"I see; you would make her take a little journey for the sake of her health."

"Precisely. Besides, 'twere an act of charity to throw the arm of a protector about her; for she is an orphan, and my rival is so much of a soldier, that he cannot pay her that attention which a prudent woman always exacts from her lover."

"A rival in the case, bah? Why don't you despatch him at once?"

"He is not so easily despatched. And, besides, I would have him live, that he may suffer such pangs as he has inflicted upon me—only in tenfold proportion. The girl must be mine; and ere we can move a step in the other matter, I must have the assistance of my comrades, to make sure of my primary object."

"It shall be done," replied the other; and, after shaking hands, they parted—each taking a different way, that they might not arouse the suspicions of the rest.

At the expiration of a week, during which time the captain of the outlaws and Ralph Osborne had had several interviews upon the subject of their recent conversation, the former took the latter aside—the whole band having absented themselves from the hovel on some marauding expedition, purposely planned by the two worthies, that they might have the field all to themselves—and together they descended to the vaults, where lay the treasures which were to enrich them both for life.

“How beautiful they look!” exclaimed the outlaw chief, moving his torch above his head, and bending over the treasures, that he might obtain a better view.

A fiendish thought crept into Osborne’s brain.

“Gold and silver, and precious stones,” continued the outlaw, “enough to enrich a dozen such as we. How we shall enjoy them, friend Ralph, when they are ours!”

There came a rushing sound, as of the passage of some heavy body through the air; a dark and massive instrument glistened for an instant in the red light of the torch, a heavy groan resounded throughout the vault, and the next moment Osborne stood alone above the coveted treasures leaning upon a gory spade.

The first transports of delight having passed over, the next thought of Osborne was the concealment of the body.

It was now late in the afternoon, and in a few hours his comrades might be expected to return.

Should he be detected, his death he knew was inevitable.

After a little reflection, he remembered a quagmire, which stood in a solitary part of the moor, and in whose slimy depths a number of the band had been reported to have lost their lives at different times.

Wrapping the body of his victim in some old canvas, the assassin slowly ascended with his burthen, and, in a few moments more, as daylight began to blend with the shadows of evening, a man might have been seen stooping over some dark and indistinguishable object in the centre of the marsh.

The removal of the treasures was a task not half so easy of accomplishment; but it was more pleasant than the other; and it was not long before Ralph Osborne had removed to a place of temporary safety the valuable deposits, to secure which he had imbrued his hands in the blood of a fellow being.

It was a lovely night, and the moon had risen ere Osborne had completed his voluntary labours.

The family of the little cottage in which Grace Leslie had found a refuge were long retired to rest, and not a sound disturbed the solemn stillness of the night.

The hours passed on; Arlington, alone, found it impossible to close his eyes in sleep; there was a vague sense of impending calamity about him which rebuked all thoughts of repose.

He arose about eleven o'clock, dressed himself, and went forth into the moonlit garden, over which a gentle breeze was straying.

At this moment there gradually emerged from the leafy covert a single dark figure, followed with like precaution by several others, and in a trice, before Arlington could make an effort at self-defence, or utter a cry for assistance, he found himself, bound and gagged, a prisoner in the hands of unknown adversaries, who were rapidly hurrying him away from the spot.

As for poor frightened Grace, she awoke from a quiet sleep, only to encounter the vindictive glances of the miscreant Ralph Osborne.

"It is in vain to cry for mercy," he replied in answer to her supplications. "Remember my oath, and cease to disturb the air with unavailing lamentations."

The trampling of hoofs below, and the confused sound of voices, announced that all was ready; and thus, for a second time, Grace Leslie found herself in the power of the only being whom she had ever hated.

THE TROOPER'S REVENGE.

CHAPTER XI

UP IN ARMS.

THE whole transaction narrated in the preceding chapter was the work of a minute. So secretly and suddenly was it accomplished, that not a single dweller in the vicinity was aware of what was going forward.

It was only when day had set in, and the feeble bodies of the old couple with whom Grace Leslie had found an asylum, were found reeling in their blood upon the floor of their apartment, that the circumstance became fairly known.

The whole country, for miles around, was up in arms, and ready to revenge so barbarous proceedings.

The first intimation of the act which Reuben received was from an anonymous note, written in the same hand as that which had been sent to him a few days previously, and reminding him of the warning which he had treated so lightly.

"Arlington and your faithful Grace," it ran, "have blinded your eyes until they can be blinded no longer, and, aware of this fact, they have taken steps which will, at least for the present, place them beyond your power."

Reuben was singularly agitated at the perusal of these mysterious words. Could it be possible that she to whom he had so frankly trusted, and whose manner always appeared so devoid of guile, could have been playing all this while, a deceptive part, for the purpose of accomplishing so sinister an object? Nothing but the jealous doubts which had for so long a time, tortured him with regard to Arlington, could induce him to believe it. Having asked and obtained permission to inquire into the affair, and, if necessary, to punish the perpetrators, Reuben selected a small party of horsemen, most of them well acquainted with the country, and immediately departed for the scene of the outrage, in a state of mind which little fitted him for duty requiring so much caution and despatch.

The appearance of every thing about the little dwelling too soon convinced him of the truth of all that he had heard.

As for Arlington, the fact of his having disappeared with Grace was, to Reuben, sufficient evidence of her guilt.

Having made numerous inquiries among the neighbours, but all to no purpose, he set on foot a search which led to the discovery of the old hut on the moor, and of the mangled bodies, the sight of which had occasioned so much horror in Osborne's mind on a recent interesting occasion.

But beyond this there was no clue left to

tell in what direction the outlaws had departed. Convinced within his own mind that Arlington had planned and executed the whole affair, with the assistance of some of those lawless wretches whose deeds were already the terror of the entire country, Reuben felt that pursuit would be useless, and having come to this conclusion, he reluctantly gave the order to return.

Once more among his comrades, Reuben endeavoured to free himself from the thoughts which harassed him by a still closer attention to the duties of the camp; but all he could do would not for a moment divert his attention from the subject which engrossed his mind.

Half maddened by his suspicions, and determined that he could not support life much longer under such a variety of conflicting emotions, he resolved to seek out Arlington, even in the face of the British camp, and demand from him an account of his treacherous conduct.

In a word, forgetful of the dangers to which such a step must expose him, Reuben Gayler became a deserter!

In the meantime, let us see what has really become of Captain Arlington and the hapless Grace Leslie.

Perfectly conscious of the danger in which he had placed himself, Osborne, with a sagacity for which no one would have given him credit, divided his party, and sent them off in different

directions, thus creating a variety of conflicting reports, which had the effect of throwing Reuben off his guard. as we have already seen.

One division was ordered to conduct Arlington to within a short distance of the nearest British encampment, while Osborne, who had succeeded to the command by making it appear that his predecessor had fallen into the hands of an American scouting party, from whom he himself had narrowly escaped, conveyed Grace towards the wildest and least inhabited district, where he knew that, at least for the present, he would be safe.

The party to whose keeping Captain Arlington had been entrusted fulfilled their duty to the letter. They conducted him to the neighbourhood of the British camp, and there deserted him.

Weakened by his recent sufferings, from the results of which he had, as yet, scarcely recovered, Arlington wandered at random about the country, sleeping at times beneath the roofs of deserted farm-houses—at others exposed to the inclemency of the elements, until it seemed as if nature must sink under so many privations.

He was, in fact, reduced to so lamentable a condition as to be scarcely able to walk, when he fortunately fell in with a party of British troopers, on a foraging expedition, and by them was recognized, and conducted to the

camp, where he had been given up as lost, and his name so reported upon the books of the regiment to which he belonged.

In a few days he was entirely recovered, and once more ready for active duty.

Villains, it would appear, generally manage to overreach themselves at the moment when they feel surest of success and thus it proved with Ralph Osborne.

Terrified at her situation, and deprived of all energy by the fresh misfortune which had fallen upon her, Grace felt that her mind was losing its wanted elasticity.

Willing to give her a brief respite, after the troubles which she had been compelled to undergo, Osborne for some days wisely refrained from annoying her with his presence.

But, while he was passing the time in listless apathy, a plan was concocting in the fertile brain of one who, with a fair start, might prove a formidable enemy to Osborne.

We have already introduced upon the scene of action a character under the soubriquet of Black Jack—so called from the jetty colour of an enormous beard, which almost concealed his face from view.

This remarkable individual had never forgiven Osborne for getting the better of him on two successive occasions, and he was contriving how he should rid the band of Osborne, and return to take possession of the riches left behind them at the hovel—in case they should

be still there—when an incident took place which assisted him in the accomplishment of his design.

Osborne one afternoon had disguised himself as a farmer's boy, and left the band, under pretence of visiting a neighbouring town, and ascertaining the movements of their enemies; but in reality for the purpose of removing from their place of deposit the valuables which he had secreted, unbeknown to his companions; who had been so constantly in motion, that they had no leisure to look after their treasures.

Black Jack, who was left in command until Osborne's return, judged this a fitting opportunity for the accomplishment of his project.

He therefore cautiously broached it to his comrades, and finding that they were by no means unwilling to second him, proposed that they should abandon Grace Leslie to her fate, return without delay to the hovel, and, securing what remained of their wealth, to remove with it to some remote spot, where they would be less liable to detection.

No sooner said than done.

Grace was informed by Black Jack of their intentions and advised to make her way to the nearest inhabited spot; regretting that he could no longer favour her with the protection of the band.

But poor Grace listened without emotion to this offer of release.

It had come too late to be of any use to her; and she had not long been abandoned to herself, when sense deserted her, and she became a maniac!

Great was the consternation of Osborne when he found how he had been served by his late adherents and his accomplices.

Great also was the astonishment of Black Jack and his associates, when they found that some one had secured the prize which they were bent upon possessing.

Not having the means upon which to subsist, these wretches were forced to attempt a fresh series of depredations; and being detected in one of their marauding expeditions, were tried and executed for their crimes.

CHAPTER XII

AN ADVENTURE.

It was one of the most melancholy days of October, and every thing bore indications of winter's rapid advent, when two men approached one another in the midst of a dense wood, through which was a path, now known as the Germantown road to Philadelphia.

One was dressed in a common smock frock

and a buff hat, and carried in his hand a heavy handled riding whip, whistling to himself, by way of accompaniment, as he journeyed.

There was nothing very inviting in the appearance of this worthy, whose hair was as red as that article was ever known to be, while his eyebrows were thick and bushy, and black as the night itself.

The other was a pale, serious looking man, of twenty-four or thereabouts, and was habited in a black velvet coat, knee breeches of the same material, with silver buckles, cocked hat, peruke, and continuations—the costume usually adopted by travelling schoolmasters of that period.

He had a stout ash cudgel over his shoulder, from which was suspended a small bundle, containing to all appearances, the poor fellow's wardrobe.

The Germantown road, at this point, continues in a straight, unbroken line, until, encountering that pretty and romantic little stream, the Wissahickon, it turns off at an abrupt angle and proceeds in the direction of Philadelphia.

The scene was dreary enough in all conscience, and the foliage being, at this point, very dense, the two travellers did not observe each other, until they had lessened the distance between them to a yard or so, when they abruptly paused, and each produced his instrument of defence, not knowing but the other might be an enemy.

"Stand fast, there, and answer an honest, straightforward question!" exclaimed he of the smock frock, whirling his whip about his head in a manner which proved that, in his hand, it would have proved no unformidable weapon. "Do we meet as friends or foes?—for both go the same way, it seems, and two enemies can never take the same track together."

"The same reason for trust exists on my part also," replied the young schoolmaster. "Nevertheless, although the question was somewhat rudely put, I will be frank with you, and if the answer displeases, I can only say I am ready to take my own part, and ask no odds of any that handles a cudgel. I am a poor schoolmaster, journeying on foot towards Philadelphia, for the simple reason that I cannot afford to ride. My name is of no consequence to any one; my capital you see in this bundle, which contains all that I possess in the world, but which I would not relinquish without a struggle. And, now, whom may you be?"

"Oh! I am jack of all trades, sir," was the answer; "sometimes one thing—sometimes another, and not overburthened with learning, I can assure you. In times of peace I owned a mill, and made meal for my neighbours, to gain me a living. In these warring times, I am everything by turns; yesterday I was a spy for General Washington, a few

days before I assisted him to thrash his foes on the Brandywine, and at present I am on the look-out for a deserter named Reuben Gayler, (who) but hold—I may be talking to the very man described in these papers.”

And, withdrawing to a prudent distance, to be beyond the reach of the other's cudgel, he perused the document which he had drawn from his pocket, and compared the person of the latter with the written description. In the meanwhile the schoolmaster's countenance underwent a transitory change, and became, almost immediately, as stoical as before.

“I am satisfied,” said the miller, after his examination, which had occupied scarcely a minute, and returning the document to his pocket. “You don't at all resemble the fellow described in these documents, and you'll forgive me that I suspected you. Here's my hand; and if you'll take it, we will journey together, and I will share my little allowance with you, as though we had been friends for ever. If you regret it, we will draw cudgels and see who is the better of the two. What do you say to my proposal? Is it a fair one?”

“I accept it with all my heart,” replied the schoolmaster; “and the more gladly, as I feel lonsomely inclined, and have need of company. We will journey together, since you say so, and, as I have friends in Philadelphia, you may command my services when there, and

whatever assistance I can render shall be freely given."

"Thanks, friend schoolmaster, for your offer, which I may, or may not accept, according to circumstances. But it is nearly time for us to be thinking of refreshment; if I am not greatly mistaken, there should be a tavern somewhere in this neighbourhood, or at least some place of shelter, where we may repose our limbs, and partake of a slight repast together."

"I see yonder the walls of an old mill," said the schoolmaster, as the object alluded to came in view. "That, as far as I can remember, is the only house within convenient distance."

"Be it so, if the inmates are not unwilling, we will sup at the mill. By my faith, I like these adventures; one might almost persuade himself that he lived in the days of romance, so many strange occurrences are taking place around us."

By this time the two had reached the mill. It was an old, dilapidated edifice, even then, to which access was gained by a little bridge, spanning the miniature stream that supplied it with water. It was built of Dutch brick, but all signs of prosperity had departed from it; the wheel was silent, and several of the paddles had fallen from it. The shutters also were dangling from their hinges, and everything about the place seemed hastening to decay.

"Rather a cheerless prospect this," said the miller, as they threw open the door, and walked within. "One of the effects of the war, I suppose. The passage of the red coats has scared the inmates away like frightened sheep and they have left the place at our disposal."

"What matters it?" rejoined the schoolmaster; "we can enjoy our supper all the better for that we are all alone. I rather like the idea. We will pass the night in this place, and I, drawing privilege from my costume, will pass for Black Knight, of whom we read in the story, while you shall be Robin Hood, and this old mill your ruined castle."

"The thought is not a bad one," responded the miller; be it so, then. But what shall we do for our friar?"

"I thought not of that; but we are a host in ourselves, and shall not need him." These words had scarce escaped the schoolmaster, when footsteps were heard upon the bridge, and the new comer, evidently alarmed at the light of the fire just kindled by the miller, turned and fled away as rapidly as his feet would allow.

"That must not be; he will spoil all our pleasure," exclaimed Robin Hood in a breath, and in a moment he was in close pursuit of the intruder. In a few minutes, however, he returned, flushed by his recent exercise, and breathing like a porpoise, from his exertions.

"The little rascal was too nimble for me," he said with a good humoured laugh. "It was but a farmer's boy, however, and his fright will not allow him to return."

They now set about the preparation of their evening meal; it was already dark, the fire kindled by the miller had the effect of setting the brick-paved kitchen in a glow.

Before long the savoury steam of a piece of dried meat, taken from the miller's pouch, perfumed the place.

These preparations being finally completed, both set to with a right good will, to despatch what lay before them, when the distant tramp of horses caught the ear of the miller, who seemed, all the while, to be anxiously waiting for something, and whose countenance underwent an immediate alteration.

"It must be pretty evident to us both," he said, "that each has been playing a part for the last hour or so. In despite of your carefully concealed peruke, your tri-coloured hat, and sable vestments, I recognize in you no other person than Reuben Gayler, the Deserter!"

"Discovered!" cried Reuben, with a look of error, "but no—you villain, whoever you may be, you shall not have the satisfaction of reaping the reward of treachery. Let this for ever silence your lips!" and before the other could anticipate him, he had drawn from his waistcoat a pistol and discharged it in the direction of his betrayer.

The latter coolly drew another, and replied with a sarcastic smile:

"That was well meant, and had it come a little nearer, might have done me injury. As it is, it has merely made a hole in my hat, and the money that I shall receive for delivering you into the hands of justice will enable me to purchase a new one. As for taking your life, that would deprive my revenge of half its keenness; for know, Reuben Gayler, that you stand in the presence of your mortal enemy, RALPH OSBORNE!"

Reuben started back, overcome by his sensations, but not intimidated.

At this moment the tramping of hoofs were heard upon the bridge; but Reuben was resolved to make a single effort to avoid the fate which seemed in reserve for him.

He rushed fiercely at Osborne, caught him by the throat, and dashing him aside, sprang through the window at a bound, and made for the little bridge, across which the troopers had just passed. Osborne immediately recovered himself, and darted to the doorway, where the soldiers were assembled, crying.

"Pursue! pursue!" and foaming at the mouth with rage.

At this instant, and while a dozen rifles were levelled at the fugitive, a wild-looking female, of almost unearthly loveliness, with garments disarrayed, and her untrammelled hair streaming upon the wind, flitted like a shadow

past Osborne as he stood in the doorway, bearing in her hand a lighted brand, plucked from the fire, and flew toward a pile of stubble that stood upon the entrance to the bridge.

In an instant all was in flames; the rotten material of the bridge took fire almost instantaneously, aided by the violence of the wind, and the astonished soldiers were glad to retire before the advancing heat.

In a few moments more the woodwork was eaten through and fell, with many a hiss, into the stream; but although a pursuit was ordered, Reuben succeeded that night in eluding his adversaries.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN THE SWAMP.

It was one of the luckiest circumstances that could have happened to Reuben that he did not look behind him as he fled.

Had he seen Grace Leslie in her present condition, he would have turned back at all hazards, and thus have placed himself within the power of his enemies.

As it was, however, he was conscious only of the immediate danger which threatened

him, and nothing, save the thought that Grace was present, and had exercised a principal agency in his escape, could have induced him to retrace his steps.

He made rapidly for the Wisahickon, into which, without hesitation, he plunged, and gaining the woody swamp which lay on the opposite side, hid himself in its tangled labyrinths, until such time as the pursuit should have died away.

There he had ample leisure to reflect over the consequences of the step which he had rashly taken.

Wandering for days about the dreary wilderness, with only a few berries to sustain himself, he soon became so emaciated that he had lost all traces of his former self.

Had it not been for the uncertainty which he felt in regard to the fate of Grace, he would have delivered himself to his comrades, reckless as to what might be his destiny.

But, under present circumstances, he had braced his mind to the endurance of every privation for the sake of accomplishing the one principal object that lay nearest his heart.

We must pass over the events of a few weeks, during which time many important operations were performed, which reflected great credit upon the American arms, and once more transfer our readers to New York.

Poor Grace! after all her sufferings and privations, she had once more found a home

beneath the roof of the kind but eccentric Lady Arlington.

Chance had thrown her in the way of the British army, after the occurrence mentioned in the preceding chapter, and she had been recognised by Captain Arlington, who, struck with commiseration for the calamity which had befallen her, immediately obtained a furlough—the campaign having just drawn to a close—and hastened with his charge to New York, where he besought his mother to leave no stone unturned that might restore the unfortunate girl to reason.

About the period of these occurrences there arrived from some southern port, a gentleman of prepossessing exterior, who was reported to have come into the possession of enormous wealth, by the decease of a near relative in England.

He immediately rented one of the finest houses in the city, and had it furnished in a manner that put to the blush even Lady Arlington's elegant mansion, which had, until then, borne the reputation of being the most stylish in town.

His equipage was of the finest description, and several negroes attended him wherever he went. Such was the urbanity of his manners, the dignity of his address, the liberality with which he showered his favours on all alike, that he was soon an established guest at the houses of the most aristocratic citizens, and,

for a while, public attention was divided almost equally between him and the war.

Captain Arlington, however, was not among the number of Sir Richard Gresham's admirers, for such was the title by which this individual was best known, although the latter was a frequent visitor at his mother's.

He had witnessed with surprise and dislike the introduction of Sir Richard to the family circle of which he was a member, and he took no pains to conceal the aversion that every act of the stranger inspired in him.

It so chanced that a very short time after his introduction to the *elite* of New York, Sir Richard gave a sumptuous entertainment, which was attended by the beauty and fashion of the city.

Lady Arlington, in spite of her son's remonstrances, would be present, and, as a matter of course, not wishing to cast discredit upon her to whom he owed his being, the gallant captain, whose heart was in a far different quarter, was compelled to accompany her.

The entertainment was all that could have been desired.

All that could please the eye, the sense, was pressed into service on the occasion, and the guests vied with one another in the magnificence of their dresses, and the brilliancy of their jewels, while the host was even more affable and kind than was his wont.

In the early part of the evening, Sir

Richard approached Captain Arlington, who would fain have avoided him, but that it was not practicable, just at that moment, and requested a few words in confidence.

"Captain Arlington," he said, extending his hand, which the latter reluctantly took; "I see that there is a prejudice existing against me in your mind, and I will do you the credit to say that you have not endeavoured to conceal it; but, it cannot be matter of surprise to you that I should feel hurt by such treatment. I am unconscious of having done anything to merit it, and as your evident coolness may operate against me in the minds of others, less fastidious than yourself, but whose good opinion is, nevertheless, still dear to me, I must beg that you will do me the justice to state your reasons."

"Sir Richard," replied Arlington, in some confusion; "You have taken me unawares, and I must confess that I am unable to answer your question satisfactorily. Prejudices will sometimes arise almost without our own knowledge, and I can only ask you to overlook the past, and consider that we are hereafter friends."

Sir Richard took the Captain's proffered hand, which he shook heartily, and a singular smile, it might more appropriately have been called a sneer, passed over his countenance, which might have aroused a fresh suspicion in Arlington's mind, had he observed it.

It passed unnoticed, however, for at this instant the latter was approached by a messenger, who handed him a note, which ran in these words.

"At ten to-night one will be waiting for you in the rear ward-room of the *George's Inn*, in New Street, having matter of import to communicate.

"As this is a public resort, you may safely come unattended; and, indeed, it is necessary that the interview should be strictly private, as the lives of more than one person depend upon the issue. A FRIEND OR FOE, AS CIRCUMSTANCES MAY PROVE HIM."

Struck by the singularity of such an incident, Arlington excused himself from longer attendance, and at the appointed hour hastened to the place designated in the anonymous note as the *George's Inn*.

Although Arlington was no coward, he could not but feel slightly agitated on entering the apartment appointed for the interview, for an inward something told him that the business which could "involve the life of more than one person," must be of some importance, and his heart half whispered him that it was, somehow or other, connected with Grace.

A tall personage, enveloped in a cloak, was pacing the floor, as Arlington made his appearance.

On hearing the latter, he made an abrupt turn, and disclosed the pale and altered

lineaments of Reuben Gayler. Arlington started back, in a kind of horror, astonished at the change. "Good God! can this be the same Reuben Gayler from whom I parted upon the river Brandywine?"

"Ay, you may well make that exclamation," was the reply; "see what a change a wanton's conduct, and a false friend's treachery have wrought in me! I am no longer Reuben Gayler, for *he* could never so debase himself as I have done!"

And Reuben seated himself, and allowed his head to recline upon the table, overcome with emotion.

"Your words are all a mystery to me," replied Arlington; "I can only suppose from your manner that you have alluded to Miss Leslie and myself. Yet, you cannot be ignorant of the facts."

"Did not Grace Leslie fly her home at your instigation?" asked Reuben, coldly.

"As heaven is my witness, we were torn thence by ruffians at the dead of night; and Miss Leslie has been ever since a maniac from the circumstances."

He then proceeded to inform Reuben of all that had transpired since their last meeting.

"But all is not yet past hope," continued Arlington. "I will see if I cannot bring yourself and Grace together; and the sudden joy of once more meeting you may have the effect to restore her weakened intellect."

"I would gladly see her," said Reuben; "and yet I am so far beneath her now, that she would only spurn me."

"What mean you, Reuben?"

"How shall I disclose, even to you, the fearful truth. Captain Arlington, I fear that your friendship for me, heretofore so well proven, will cease when you learn that I am a—**DESERTER!**"

Arlington *was* somewhat astonished by the information; but he knew that there must be some circumstance which might mitigate though it could not excuse so degrading an act.

"I must first hear your story," said Arlington, "for I know that you must have had some urgent motive for the step."

"I know not how I shall requite such kindness. In a moment of passion, almost crazed at the loss of one in whom my every wish was centered, I confess that I was mad enough to desert my post. But oh! my friend, you can never imagine the torments I have since then suffered. Not a day—an hour that has not been fraught with suffering. Even in my dreams, I imagined that I saw the finger of scorn and hatred pointed at me."

"You overdraw the picture; trust me, all is not so bad as you would believe. Your general is said to have a humane heart, and when all the facts in regard to your desertion shall have reached his ears, he will make ex-

cuse for your error, and restore you to your former honourable standing. But come, there is no time to spare, and the quicker you see Miss Leslie the better for both."

Upon this, Reuben pulled his cloak about his ears, and followed the Captain from the tavern.

The Governor's mansion was but a few rods distant, and they were only a minute or so in gaining it.

While Arlington went upstairs to find Grace, who had been left under the charge of a governess in the absence of the family, Reuben was cautioned to await his coming in the garden; and in a frame of mind far from being enviable, he continued pacing the gravelled walks, until the footsteps of Arlington met his ears, and the latter, almost immediately afterward appeared, leading Grace, as lovely as ever, by the hand.

A settled melancholy was on her face, and in the glistening moonbeams, which shone full upon the spot where they stood, she more resembled a statue than a being of human mould. For some moments she remained gazing earnestly upon Reuben, although not a word had thus far been uttered.

But gradually a chord was touched—memory, that had so long lain dormant, returned to lighten up the clouded brain; she burst into a flood of tears at last, and threw herself, weeping, upon Reuben's breast.

Reason had resumed its seat, and for the moment both were happy; all but Arlington—who turned away to hide an emotion that he could not but feel.

Long and earnest was the interview between the lovers. In the happiness of the moment, Reuben forgot his troubles; and he was only reminded of them when the sound of a clock came upon the drowsy air, chiming the hour of twelve.

As the last stroke vibrated upon the ear, a small boat, containing several figures, grated against the beach at the bottom of the garden.

Bidding a hasty adieu for the present, Reuben parted from Grace with a heavy heart, and, waiting until he had seen them both enter the house, he turned for the purpose of departing, when he was astonished to find himself surrounded by several rough-looking men who, without stopping for parley, laid violent hands upon him, and hurried him towards the shore.

Resistance, he saw, would be useless, and he therefore submitted with a good grace to what he could not avoid.

As the last boat receded rapidly from the beach, a solitary figure, which strongly resembled that of Sir Richard Gresham, was seen peering out from the shadow of the trees which lined the shore!

* * * * *

Our narrative is now drawing to a close.

Early on the following morning, Reuben Gayler found himself a prisoner in the American camp, charged with being a deserter, at a time when his country was most in need of his services.

The offence was a flagrant one, and it seemed as though it must go hard with him.

The circumstances, however, were laid before Washington by Grace herself, who had contrived, with a woman's ingenuity, to obtain an interview, and, her tears prevailing, after a delay of several days, Reuben, upon promise of good behaviour, was discharged from custody, and restored to his commission.

The battle of Yorktown occurred shortly afterwards, and by his bravery on that occasion, Reuben fully recovered the good opinion which he had temporarily lost.

Peace being declared, the young soldier hastened to New York, where he was shortly afterwards united to the object of his choice.

Our story has now one person only to deal with.

For some months, *Sir Richard Gresham* pursued his splendid career without interruption, but an accidental encounter with Reuben Gayler occurred, who immediately recognised in him his old enemy, Ralph Osborne.

And after removing the veil which had enshrouded his history, the facts of Miss

Leslie's case having been made known, a warrant was forthwith issued for his arrest. But he suddenly disappeared from New York.

CHAPTER XIV.

GUILT PUNISHED.

ALL was hushed and still in a lonely tavern, for the mistress of the house had retired to rest, an aged negress who waited during the day had disappeared within her cell, and the host sat alone at a table, drinking and smoking, but uttering not one word.

It was late—the wind was hushed and low—a strange unnatural stillness pervaded all nature; and there sat the landlord, his eyes fixed on vacancy, a pipe between his teeth, and he only moved to reach the liquor, or fill his pipe, which he ever kept puffing at with all the phlegm of a Dutchman or a pasha.

The drink made him merry at times, with a hollow, horrid merriment, in which shrieks were heard for laughter, and noise was the sign of geniality; but he was serious, sad, and heavy over his drink to-night, and the more he mixed and the more he swallowed the duller he became, and the more did the weight of sadness and gloom bear him down.

"'Tis plaguey cold'to-night—ha! ha!" he said, as he shivered in the pale moonlight; "and the whisky's mighty weak," he added, as he dashed raw spirits into his glass.

"What has come over me? Am I getting weak, old, foolish, eh? Drink, drink, drink, old boy! it's the drink warms the heart—ha! ha! ha! Let us be jolly—I would somebody would come; I feel lonely—no, I don't; there's my bottle, ha! ha! ha! that's the friend; he never deserts you—as long as you pay. Don't forget you're a landlord now, old boy—ha! ha! ha! Make 'em pay, no trust—Well, the stuff does seem weak to-night, awful weak! What a time the girl is; the moon's been up ever so long. It's my private opinion it's to-morrow. Well! if the bottle ain't empty! Let's have another, old fellow—plenty more where that came from; let us be jolly. Hurrah!"

The man rose tottering—he had drunk one whole bottle and walked across the room for another. There was no friendly hand to keep the poisoned draught from his lips; he was master in his house—oh, yes! nobody would have doubted that who had seen him go half-stumbling, with hot face and winking eyes, to the little corner bar. He was lord and master, uncontrolled chief of the family—allowed no questions to be asked, permitted no remarks on his conduct, and walked erect, in theory, proud of his majesty.

After considerable coquetting with the

counter and the bottle—after the same fashion as that of the celebrated individual who found his key-hole stolen one night, Bill Savage regained his seat, sat himself cosily in his arm-chair, held up his hand, and turned the neck of the bottle towards his glass. He then took up the bumper, and seemed very much surprised to find the contents of his glass of a very watery nature, which was the less extraordinary, as, in his present sagacious mood, the jolly landlord had omitted to draw the cork.

“Well, I never—did,” muttered Bill. “Whisky—I say whisky—mind you, whisky grows—I believe that it—grows weaker—every—day. The worst of it is, old boy, water don’t grow any stronger. I should say the world’s coming to an end!”

After this speech, which was directed at the bottle, Bill remained musing for some time, his eyes fixed vacantly on the whisky, the vapidity of which he so much lamented.

How long he remained so he could not tell. He had been known, after a nap of six hours’ duration, to declare he had only shut his eyes.

But, on the present occasion, he was ready to aver that he did not do even that.

There he sat, looking hard at the table, trying all the time, he declared, to explain to himself how it came about that the whisky was so weak, when he suddenly saw the bottle move, as by human agency, and fill to over-

flowing, with raw spirit, the glass which he had emptied.

"Hollo!" he exclaimed, "who is that?"

A chuckling laugh was the only reply vouchsafed to him.

Bill Savage looked across the table, and in a chair, sitting in an easy posture, was a man. He was an odd kind of man, too.

He wore a red, pointed cap, a red cloak, and had a pointed chin, and a pale face, and eyes like glow-worms in a gun-barrel, and saw-like teeth.

"Now, then, old fellow," said the stranger, in a husky, hot voice, "drink!"

"I've got no glass," replied Bill mechanically.

"What do you want with a glass, eh?" chuckled the man, knocking off the neck of the bottle, and swallowing the contents at a draught.

"Eh! you forget me," said Bill, with all the eagerness of the sot.

"Plenty more where that came from," continued the other.

"Who is to pay?" asked Savage, with a glimmering of the landlord still about him.

"Never mind paying, let's be social. Now, then, Dinah, another bottle," said the stranger to the old negress, who had suddenly appeared on the scene.

"All right," repeated the other with a drunken laugh, "it's all right! Who talks

about paying?—it's prime," and he smacked his lips with infinite relish.

"You taste it now," said the new comer with a knowing wink.

"Ye—es," gasped Bill, with tears in his eyes, "it's rather hot, it burns me, I'm on fire!"

"Not a bit of it, quite a mistake, warms the heart, my boy," repeated the other.

"Well, it is rather strong," insisted Bill "but I'll take another; I'm awful thirsty."

The other laughed heartily, and poured him out a second tumbler, which did not seem quite so strong; in fact, it was quite delicious.

"It's prime," roared Savage. "Prime! rich glorious! I say, old boy, sing us a song."

"Don't know any," replied the other, in a tone which seemed to prove that if he did, it was not desirable he should recollect one just then, the harmony of a man after his potation not being of the highest order of merit.

"Well, then, make a noise; anything to be sociable, eh!"

The man laughed again, and hammered on the table with his glass.

"By the way," suddenly said Bill Savage putting his left fore-finger to the same side of his nose, "who are you?"

The man laughed still more heartily. Bill Savage began to get into a passion. He spoke now in a tone of concentrated rage.

"If you don't answer, I'll know why."

A strange noise startled him; he looked again. There was nobody in the chair, the tallow candle flickered on the table, the whisky bottle stood before him uncorked, and somebody was knocking stoutly at the door.

"Coming! coming!" he said, peering round the room, a little more sober than three hours before. "Can it have been a dream? was it? Ha! ha! ha! it was the demon of the drink. He often comes now, that's what makes the whisky so weak. I've dreamed a good deal of him lately. Coming, coming!"

"Orl rite," said a husky voice without, "but the kerveker yer comes the better."

"That voice," muttered Bill Savage, laying down the candle again, and standing erect with terror and alarm, "that voice! Am I dreaming still?"

"Now then!" cried the other, with the richest twang.

"Open," repeated an earnest, solemn voice, "we are travellers, weary and hungry, and seek rest."

"I guess it is rather late, strangers," replied Bill Savage, assuming the strongest Connecticut nassality he could, as he unbolted the door.

"It is late," said the traveller, entering; "we lost our way in the woods, and your light led us here."

"Glad to give you a shake-down," replied Bill, surveying the strange-looking serving-

THE TROOPER'S REVENGE.

an with considerable uneasiness and doubt.
"I reckon you mean eatin'!"

"Rather," said the man, putting down his saddle-bags, and then falling on a bench; "I'm wound up, please, sir, excuse me," he continued.

"Rest, eat sleep," replied the other, gravely; "we start early."

"No, ve vont; that's him," said the man in the rear, as Bill Savage disappeared in search of the negress.

"Are you sure?" replied the other, trembling in every limb.

"If t^h arn't him, eh," he added, rolling on his bench as the other returned, "ain't I tired, no, I ain't, not at all. If you please, master landlord, you ain't got a bit of a hossler about, have ye? coss there's two tidy bits of horse-flesh down them blessed steps!"

"Well, I reckon I'm hoss and hossler too," said Bill, at random; "so I'll put the hoofed critturs right."

With these words he went outside the door and left the two alone.

"Ah," said one, laying his hand on the other's arm, "are you sure of what you say?"

"Bless you, sir, I know'd his voice," said he, positively; "it's a little bit thicker like, but it's him, as sure as I'm here. Mum! Here comes one of them blacking-pots."

The stranger fell into the arm-chair in which Savage, as he called himself—had slept

so many hours, and began turning over in his mind the best way of carrying out his purpose.

Here we may as well let the reader fully into a secret, which, perhaps, he has partially guessed. The two visitors into the gloomy domicile of Bill Savage were no other than our friend Reuben Gayler, and a queer genius known as Seth Slow.

About the time that Osborne joined the band of marauders, Seth, then a mere stripling and a poor orphan—of loose morals, but not bad-hearted—belonged to the troop of ruffians. As he was not considered very bright, he never was entrusted with any important criminal action—but was used as a sort of messenger.

When he fully became aware of the blackness of their deeds, he left them and joined the army. Afterwards he became a servant to Reuben Gayler.

The young patriot, though happy in the affections of his dear wife, never gave up the idea of capturing and bringing Osborne to justice.

A traveller in the wilderness had told him that he had met with a man that, spite of the wear and tear of years of dissipation, he believed to be no other than Osborne.

Guided by the traveller's directions, Gayler and Seth had arrived at the inn, as already narrated.

After the innkeeper had left the rooms he soliloquised thus:

"Oh! 'tis a weary, weary life. But up, I must awake, and be a man. They wait."

And ceasing his disjointed talk, which had continued while he descended the steps, taking the horses to the sheds, and giving them food, he once more turned toward the house, turning over in his mind the wisest plan of escape from the consequences of his past crimes.

He rejected the only truly wise one—telling the truth; at all events until he should have found it impossible to do otherwise. Time, impunity, and drink, had hardened and deadened his heart.

He found the two men eating and drinking like men who had travelled far, and he merely pointed out what was plentiful in the place, and then retired into a corner where he sat down, and closing his eyes, appeared to dose, while the travellers were finishing their supper.

The old negress all the while bustled about, growling between her teeth at the way in which she had been roused up to wait upon the new comers.

About twenty minutes later, the travellers intimated that they had finished their meal, and asked where they could sleep.

"Well, I calc'late I kin find a bed or two," said Bill Savage, rising; "the Possum's Hole is gin'rally considered first chop."

"Show me a bed-room, then," replied one of the men, as carelessly as he could.

"This way," continued Bill, rising sleepily and rubbing his eyes.

"Orl rite," said Seth, who really was very tired and inclined for rest.

"I guess you'll want a room tu?" asked the landlord in an off-hand way.

"I'm not partikler, never was; so as I sleep," and Seth, who had spared neither beer or whisky, prepared to follow.

Savage took up two tallow candles and led the way. He ascended the steps, turning to the right, he pushed open a door facing the stairs, which revealed a passage of some length, out of which several other passages branched.

"Why, this is a large place of yours," said Reuben, secretly much surprised; "you can sleep a regiment."

"We gin'rally do sleep a few," replied Bill, in a humble and obsequious tone. "This is a good room. There ain't no curtains, but that air a bed is comfortable, stranger."

"Thank you," said Reuben, as he entered the room.

It was a small, square place, without any window, receiving air and light in the day from a kind of fissure in the roof.

On all sides the walls were of logs, with mud to fill up the interstices, but a glance at the roof showed at once that it was a compartment in a cavern.

The bed was a kind of shelf raised on logs with straw and horse-cloths. On these Gayle cast himself, and wearied, exhausted as he was, after a fervent prayer for the success of his mission, fell fast asleep.

Seth followed Bill a little further down the passage until he came to a door leading into a similar place, which he entered without a sign of suspicion or doubt, took his candle, wished the other good night, yawned, and threw himself on the bed.

The instant, however, the door was closed behind him, he, without the slightest noise, raised himself on his elbow and listened.

He distinctly heard a heavy bar lowered, a bar which he had remarked as he entered, and which entirely prevented all exit.

"Nabbed, by gum," said Seth, in a low tone. "I thought as how he know'd me. Ah, Mister Osborne, you're very deep, you are; but here's one as is deeper."

He listened again, and distinctly heard the retreating footsteps of Savage, and then the closing of the bar against his master's door.

Seth grinned and got up. He examined the door. It was a great, heavy door of planks and bars, hung on huge old hinges, fastened very strongly, while a couple of big wooden bolts promised privacy and retirement to the traveller if he chose to take it.

Seth was one of those men who never threw a chance away.

He made sure of the bolts, and then proceeded to draw several articles from his voluminous pockets, and from the saddle-bags, which he had taken care to convey to his room.

First there came a pair of pistols of rather startling size, a lantern, a whole parcel of tools, a small saw, a chisel, hammer, and a number of skeleton keys, not omitting a small crow-bar, which honest Seth wore under his coat.

When Gayler objected to these questionable articles, the fellow had urged such a host of arguments in their favour, from his knowledge of the character of Osborne, that he yielded, and allowed the other to act according to his own experience.

"Now, then, for a quiet nap," said Seth to himself. It's all rite—let him go to sleep—and then, my! won't I startle his two eyes."

Having thus arranged his plans, Seth retired to his virtuous couch, fully convinced in his own mind that he was a hero, and certainly with an easier conscience than ever he had enjoyed on any previous occasion when he had brought forth his somewhat suspicious professional implements.

Seth was far too old a warrior to oversleep himself on such an occasion.

He subsequently declared that he did not stay more than two hours in his bed, and yet that when he jumped up there was a flickering light from some place on the roof.

He had taken the precaution to light his oil-

lamp in the lantern, so that he now again lit the candle, and proceeded to business.

After a careful examination of the door, he came to the conclusion that to saw a square hole, large enough to put his hand through, was the best plan of operation; and being a man of few words and ready wit, he at once began to put his plan into execution.

A sharp chisel soon enabled him to make a hole, through which his long thin saw could penetrate; and then, having well greased that useful instrument, he began to work steadily, and yet with extreme caution.

Every minute or so he listened attentively, and finding that no alarm was given, proceeded with his task.

One side of the plank which was crossways from side to side of the door, had been completely sewn through, and the second was just about to give way and allow the wood to fall in, when Seth Slow distinctly heard a noise.

He speedily withdrew the saw, blew out the candle, closed the dark-lantern, and put his ear to the place where he had been at work.

It was a sound of heavy but cautious steps which came down the passage, and soon reaching his own door, halted.

Then the bar was cautiously removed, fortunately, it appeared, without any sawdust being noticed, and the door pushed.

The bolts held firm.

"He's bolted it," muttered Savage, between

his set teeth, while Seth clutched a pistol as he felt the bar replaced.

"At yer old work, Mister Osborne," said Slow, shaking his head.

He listened again. The landlord was going away, but quite in an opposite direction from that by which he came. Slow waited a moment, then wrenched off the piece of wood, put his hand through, raised the bar, slid the bolts, and with his two pistols in his belt, his lantern in one hand, and the crowbar slung on his right wrist, he darted out into the passage just in time to catch a glimpse of Bill Savage disappearing up a flight of steps about thirty feet a-head.

Seth, determined to penetrate the mysteries of the place, followed without hesitation.

He had lost sight of the ruffian proprietor of the Possum's Hole, who seemed to have improved the natural advantages of the locality to a degree that would have been surprising had not his long residence there in part explained it.

But of this Seth did not think. All he cared for was to find out what Osborne was really about.

He trod cautiously along the passage, until he came to a flight of steps, or rather a ladder of wood, against the side of the rock, and which apparently led to another fissure about ten feet above. Seth began to ascend the breaking stairs with extreme caution, and

found himself in a few moments at the mouth of a kind of cavern, through which there was a strong draught.

Seth did not hesitate a moment, but pushed on, and soon caught sight of a glimmering light a little a-head.

He trod now with all the cat-like caution of a house-breaker, and in a moment more found himself by the open door of a room, once a part of the cave, but divided off by a strong partition.

Beside this door was a ladder which led perpendicularly up to the side of the rock.

All this Seth took in at a glance, but he quickly turned to the door itself, and started to find himself close to Bill Savage.

His back was turned towards him, and he stepped towards the floor over a hole.

Then Seth saw him draw a small bag from his pocket, which, from the sound, he knew to be money, and throw it down upon other money, after which he dropped a stone over the hole and began to rise.

Seth gave him no time to catch him, but turned back, and reached his room as rapidly as possible, quite satisfied with the discovery he had made.

He slept soundly until next morning without further disturbance, and rose late.

He was about to leave his room and set his master free, when he heard voices, and crept out cautiously to listen.

He distinctly saw the person of a sentry with his back turned to the door of the room in which his master was confined. He also distinctly caught the sound of many men talking. It was quite evident that Savage had received a considerable accession of strength in the night.

Seth quietly gathered up his tools, slipped out of his door, shut it behind him, and, turning to the right, began following the path which the master of the house had taken. As he expected, at the top of a ladder there was an opening. It was in the centre of a thicket. Seth did not stop to examine the view.

He saw a track before him, leading eastward, and he determined to avail himself of his liberty to place as long a distance between himself and Savage as possible, quite satisfied that he was thus best serving the interest of his master.

To have attempted to rescue him under the circumstances, would have been to have run too great a risk.

When Bill Savage found in the morning that Seth had made use of his old schooling to escape from the Possum's Hole, his rage and fury knew no bounds. At early dawn a party of Indians and white men had arrived at the place on a secret expedition, in which Savage was concerned, and for which the use of his house was required.

This had made him, for a short time, neglect

attending to his own private affairs, especially as the arrival of this band to a certain extent served his purpose. It was some consolation to know that Gayler was safe.

He little feared the law, which could scarcely reach the outlaw in his den, while it would have been equally hopeless to have contended against two men like Gayler and Seth, had they remained free in their movements on his premises.

What dark thoughts passed through his mind, what gloomy ideas, the necessary consequences of former crimes, came to him in the morning, it would be hard to say. In detaining Reuben, he had no fixed object in view; he knew not how he was to get rid of him. Like many other criminals, he kept him a prisoner and trusted to the chapter of accidents.

The rage of Reuben was great when he found that he was trapped, caught like a wild beast in a snare. He raged and fumed, and, we fear, swore, so terrible was the reaction from the previous night's hope.

He called to Seth, to Osborne, promised and threatened; all to no purpose. At last, however, he sank down exhausted, and soon becoming calmer, kneeled and besought assistance in his new, unexpected, and sore trial.

He received food and water, but not one of the men would answer any questions relative to his fate. He heard at last that Seth had escaped, and this came at once like a ray of

hope. And he listened, and listened, and listened, but all in vain.

Toward evening, Possum's Hole was again silent. It was tenanted only by Savage, his wife, the negress, and two renegade white men.

Meanwhile Bill Savage—we will call him by the name he went in that house—had gone back to the common room, to attend to the wants of a numerous party which had just arrived, all clamorous for drink and food.

This occupied him for some time, and drowned his thoughts, which were not of a very pleasant character.

However we may be hardened in crime, the prospect of a new one will always painfully affect even the most callous.

Presently the motely group of ruffians dispersed themselves over the house in search of rest, some outside even behind the wood-pile, each where his fancy took him.

Bill and his wife were again alone. He looked at her sternly, and with some degree of hesitation, as if undecided what he should do with her. At last, however, he spoke.

"Martha," he said, "be ready by dark. Most likely we shall leave this place for ever."

"Eh! vat!" exclaimed the unfortunate Dutch woman.

"Pack up as little as possible. We shall have only two horses, and I shall have my load! Hush!"

* * * * *

The shades of evening were falling, the band of desperadoes had as far as possible made themselves look like the decent retainers of a wealthy house; Bill was eating his supper, having got everything ready but his gold, when an Indian came slouching into the place.

He was a man of middle height, with hideous paint all over his face, streaks of varied hue, especially those which usually characterise the half-drunken conjuror. He had an ample supply of bells upon his person, that jingled as he went. The guard outside let him pass unnoticed, but looked lazily in to see what reception he would meet with.

"Boozoo, brudder—glass whisky!" said the Indian, in a deep guttural tone.

"Take it, and be hanged to you," replied Bill, savagely.

"Here dollah," said the Indian, with a grin.

"Oh, if you have a dollar, it's all right!" exclaimed the mollified innkeeper, holding out his hand for the coin, which he pocketed without offering change; "you'd better take a bottle, I guess."

"Me no want bottle," continued the other, in broken English, "me want drink, eat, sleep."

"Well, we're pretty full of strangers, but you can sleep outside, I guess——"

"A pretty fellow you," said one of the men, advancing from behind the bar; "you expect gentlemen to put up here, and you give shelter to drunken Indians."

"Drunken Indian good as you," replied the Indian, with offended dignity.

Savage started, looked nervously at the Indian, and advanced nearer.

"Who are you, and whence came you?" he asked, curiously, as he surveyed his paint and features.

"Him Muskwash," said the other, moving with all the gait of a drunken man.

"Ah!" exclaimed Bill, quietly, for he knew Muskwash well, "and since when have you taken the name of Muskwash?"

"Since Muskwash, my brother, was killed by the whites."

"Mr Muskwash," exclaimed Savage, "I have long wished for this opportunity—at last I have you. Hold the door there; at the peril of your lives let none pass." The Indian stepped back flourishing his tomahawk.

At the same moment, he drew from beneath his blanket, with his left hand, a small bugle, and blew a piercing battle-call.

It was answered by a wild cheer. Another instant and the doors were driven from their hinges, and a troop of dismounted partisans rushed into the room. Before Savage could recover from his surprise a blow from the tomahawk of Muskwash had felled him to the ground. The other men at the inn made no attempt to interfere.

The Dutch woman, who passed as the wife of Bill Savage, readily opened the prison door

for Reuben Gayler, who was found much exhausted for want of food.

Everything was soon explained.

Seth had travelled but a short distance in the forest before he came across the track of a company of mounted partisans, who were escorting a commissioner through the Indian country. The officer in command readily offered the services of himself and soldiers to rescue Gayler.

Seth was disguised as an Indian, to effect an entrance, with what result has just been seen.

After Osborne had disappeared from New York, he went into the interior, adopted the name of Bill Savage, went through a variety of criminal adventures—among them, murdering a Dutch settler, and taking his wife and property. Subsequently he took to in-keeping, and became a besotted drunkard.

Reuben Gayler and Seth determined to start the next morning with their prisoner. But the morning light fell upon Osborne's corpse. He had committed suicide during the night, giving another verification of the line, "the way of the transgressor is hard."

THE END.

THE
SPY AND THE TRAITOR.

A TALE OF THE AMERICAN WAR.

It is hardly two score and ten years since a gallant bark was seen anchored near these very waters. She was armed and an enemy. The quiet moonlight was sleeping all around her, and an unusual stillness pervaded every part, as she lay there between the guarded shores. It was a time of trouble in the land. There was warlike stir on both sides of this deep river, and the heights that you see rising up there like giants over its placid bosom, were then alive with the glancing of bayonets, the gleaming of swords, and the noise of warriors. Red-handed oppression was urging her vengeful way amidst these fair hills with bare steel, and a scowling front; and over these waves boomed the deadly shot, carrying destruction into ranks of hardy men who stood everywhere here to guard the passes to their native mountains. Daily the straggling reports of

skirmishers and scouting parties sent their distant echoes round these borders, and often did the night glitter with the blaze of rifled and desolate dwellings. It was when hope was low, and energy almost paralyzed among this stricken people, when their councils were low-voiced, and the stoutest who stood in the halls of deliberation grew pale, when resource seemed about to fail, and the hero who led them felt his heart quake with doubt and dismay. It was indeed the time of trial. The spirit of the Revolution was retreating to its fastnesses, and from the highlands of the Hudson it looked out with a determined, but a despairing devotion, over the world it had vowed to redeem or to expire in redeeming. The presence of an armed ship therefore, so far up the water of the North River, could not, at any time, fail of being an object of interest, though it was not particularly calculated to excite suspicion at the period to which I refer. There had before been hard contest and bloody struggles in these glens and upon these headlands. The intrepid Wayne had wrested a stronghold here from the unguarded enemy, and these fortresses of nature had sent the thunder of their cannon far into the hills; while below them, in these waters, tall ships hung out their flags, and displayed their embattled sides to the shores, which they at once menaced and protected. It was no matter of alarm, then, that a boat might be seen on the

night my story commences shooting silently from that ship above mentioned to the eastern shore of the Hudson. It was near midnight, and a slow grey mist was floating along the indented banks of the river, and for some distance off upon the water it rested like a thin veil, rendering everything indistinct that lay beyond it, or approached through the dim medium which it constituted. The vapour, while it was not dense enough to hide objects between the vessel and the land, thus served to deaden the lustre of the moonlight, and afford a partial protection to those whose intention might be to gain the shore in secrecy.

Such evidently appeared to be the object of the barge which was now approaching. With equal caution and alacrity it was dropped in by the low black rocks, and drawn by the projecting points, into a small cove, which offered a convenient and secluded landing-place. An individual stepped hastily from the boat, and after a few words between him and those that remained on board, uttered in rapid but low tone, it drew out of the cove and disappeared. The person that now stood alone, in the dull moonlight was apparently quite youthful, of a slight frame, and, as far as could be discovered, of an easy carriage and a military air. He was dressed plainly. A dark surtout enveloped his person almost entirely, and was buttoned to his throat, and his neck was muffled in a slight handkerchief.

Perhaps the keen observer might have discovered under its folds slight indications of a crimson collar, but the particular dress was admirably concealed by the external garment. The stranger stood some moments as if listening; he then looked up, as though to see how the night was going—and around him with a visible air of anxiety. But his suspense was destined to last but a short time. He had paced the ground he occupied but a few times, when a person appeared leading a horse, himself mounted on another. Hardly a word was passed, and the stranger mounted, and both rode rapidly away towards the hills. They went on in silence—the one evidently with the sagacity of a guide—the other, as though he was interested to follow. Not even a whisper was exchanged, nothing but the fall of the horse's hoofs broke upon the stillness of the night. Their course lay through a part of the country extremely wild and romantic; and sleeping, as it did, under the calm light of the moon, at midnight, it was hard almost for the riders themselves to believe that it was a land at that moment frowned upon by ruin, and trampled over by an unrelenting and exterminating foe. Many spots by which they wheeled in their rapid way bore deep marks of the rude spirit and the scathing hand of war, war in which they bore a part, and in the midst of whose momentary slumbers they were hastening to deeds of high import. But those riders had little to

think of and much to effect. Still urging forward their horses with all the speed which the path would admit of, they soon arrived at the point of their destination, and now halted before a small and solitary building, just without the American posts, on the borders of one of those ravines which reach away between the towering highlands of the Hudson.

Following the example of his conductor, the stranger dismounted. The horses were led away, and for a short time he was left alone within the shade of the building. It seemed to be an uninhabited building; no light gleamed from its windows, and everything about it was gloomy. The stranger appeared to be impatient. His companion, however, soon joined him, and silently led the way towards a low door. Having entered, he made it secure, and, requesting him to follow, he conducted the stranger along a narrow passage, by the side of the dwelling, faintly lighted by the moon, whose beams fell in by the small windows. Descending a few steps, he cautiously opened a door, drew respectfully back, still holding it in his hand, and motioned the stranger to enter. He did so, and it was gently closed upon him. He now stood in a low square room, slightly furnished, with an unpainted wainscot and a sanded floor. Here and there a coarse picture, in a black frame, under a triumphal arch of asparagus or evergreen, hung against the white wall, a few

durable and heavy fashioned chairs were stationed about, and over one of them was flung a dark military cloak. The rich hilt of a sword projected from it on one side, and over it hung a hat, such as was commonly worn at that period. Before the hearth sat a substantial table, and on it were scattered confusedly papers that looked like documents, bundles of letters, and some separate, as though just opened, or about to be despatched; and in the midst lay small rolls in the shape of maps and plans, that served to lend a grave and business-like air to the place. On one corner of the table, just separated from the papers, lay a brace of richly mounted pistols, and in close companionship stood a half-emptied wine-glass, that seemed to proclaim some enterprise in hand that required more effectual support to the spirit than secrecy and arms together could afford. A fire blazed cheerfully in the tiled chimney, and threw a look of comfort over the whole room, as it played with a brilliant look against the ceiling—while the firm closed shutters confined every particle of its rays to the four walls of the apartment. In front of the fire, and beside the table, sat an elderly personage, in a deep study over one of the charts I have mentioned, which he had spread out before him, and gazed upon with an intense look of abstraction and anxiety. He looked up with a start, as the stranger entered, and hastily rising, ap-

proached him with an air of open satisfaction. A dark smile passed over his face as he extended his hand, and requested him to be seated. There was something striking about this individual. His countenance was that of a man who has long since surrendered himself to the sway of his passions, without the least resistance; and deep traces of their power upon him could be discerned as the light fell upon his features. There was about his expression the severity of one used to command, with a recklessness and abandonment which we cannot reconcile with good principles or a good heart. The contraction about his mouth, and the quick furtive glances of his dark eye, argued rapidity and determination, but betrayed a restless and designing spirit. Dark hair lay upon his pale temples, and curled round his low and crafty brow; while over the whole mien you could distinctly trace the furrows worn there by evil and ungoverned feelings, partially losing themselves in the flushed and bloated expression of the libertine. The face was indeed in vivid contrast with that of the young stranger who sat opposite, whose noble and handsome countenance proclaimed at once the intelligent mind and the high and unsuspecting spirit. There was something even beautiful in his manly yet delicate features, and his lofty and expanded brow. His full eye beamed steadily and directly onwards; and in his pale and anxious

look you could trace all those effects which highly cultivated feeling and generous sensibility convey to the human countenance, and mingle with its minutest expressions. There was that about his face, moreover, which we have all observed, but can hardly define—something that unconsciously, and yet immediately assures you, that you are in the presence of a gentleman.

Both personages appeared to be officers of distinction. The elder wore the full uniform of an American general, and dashed his martial air with a good deal of the careless demeanour of fashionable life; while the younger, with much more elegance of manner, still retained a degree of military precision that served to give fuller effect to the symmetry of his figure. He had now thrown aside his muffler and surtout, and discovered the glittering dress of a British aid-de-camp. As would be expected of persons who had daring and desperate matters to employ them, the first salutations had hardly passed, when they came at once to the important occasion which had demanded their interview. "We are so far secure," said the elder officer, after having cautiously examined the apartment—"and now," continued he, seating himself again—"now we must be free."

"My office first is to listen, then, I believe," said his companion, with a faint smile.

"I might tell you a long tale, I think," re-

turned the other, with a quick and scornful glance—"were this the time and place—but it does not, hardly, befit—I will tell it at the head of armies, and not only to you, but to the world—meanwhile, let me say how much better I feel this to be, than this dangerous, dull work of correspondence by pen and ink—despatching letters in haste and fear, and waiting for them in doubt—indeed, I have hardly felt till this moment that the plan would carry—is Sir Henry sanguine?"

"He believes you sincere, and has every confidence in your courage and skill," returned the young Englishman.

"As to the last, let time and the event prove it," said the other hastily; "but as to the first," continued he, losing himself at once in the dark and revengeful passion which seemed to actuate him like a demon—"as to that, would to God he knew how much there has been to make me so in this business. Would that he knew the extent of that damnable injustice which has made me forget this land, and only remember the injuries I have received in it. I have but told him my feelings in my correspondence with him—he knows nothing of the history of my career hitherto. Sincere! if there is any sincerity in a despairing spirit, I have it. How have my services here been repaid? by a scanty starveling pittance, called national bounty. I have thrown away my fortune, my blood, and

almost my life, in fighting you, my former enemies; and when I turned to ask remuneration, how was I answered?—by a trial for misconduct, and a public reprimand for my generosity. I have been frowned upon for doing my duty; and my exertions, the best I could make, have been paid for in reviling. I have been insulted with office, for I have been laughed at when I asked for the humble means of supporting its dignity. I have traversed this thankless land from one end to the other, with a tireless step and zeal unquenchable, to do it service, and I have been paid in sneers, and told to hope for oblivion. I have been driven out from them because I was not puritanical, and yet they talk of freedom and independence! Sincere! they have turned the milk of human kindness within me into gall; and now they shall find it out. The cursed ingratitude of this country will not be forgotten by me, while my arm has nerve enough to strike home to the heart where it originates!"—The young Englishman gazed in silence on the vehement manner of his elder companion. His heart could never respond to the sentiments he had listened to, or own the principle which had engendered and drew them forth. But it was not a part of his business to repel them—or to alter the determination to which the indulgence of them had brought their victim. On the contrary, he was there to give directions to, and aid the

execution of schemes, which had been conceived and ripened under the influence of those dark and revengeful and desolating passions. "If your plans," said he, addressing his companion, "are as well matured as your determinations of retaliating upon your ungrateful country, we have indeed everything to hope from your agency—the stronghold must be ours."

"Draw up, then—here I have it, palpably on paper—and you shall hear my proposals in detail."

So saying, he threw more wood upon his fire, offered to fill a glass for his companion, which was refused—replenished his own, and tossed it off, and having arranged his lights and papers so as to give full survey of the ground, he spread out his plan, motioned the British officer to his side, and in a low voice, accompanying his finger as it travelled over the surface before him, entered deeply and devotedly into an explanation of his arrangements, and the modes he had employed of effecting the grand object of their interview.

Long and busy was their conference. Dark questions were raised that it took time and forethought to answer—and objections rose as they went deeper into the subject, which it was no slight task to do away to mutual satisfaction. Often did both parties gaze in a dreamy state between perplexity and abstraction over the paper before them. Silent and

undecided, they frequently dismissed one point to make way for another of equal difficulty, until the hours rolled insensibly away, and before they were aware, night was disappearing before the grey light of the morning. At length, after a tedious and protracted examination of some particular which seemed to have an important bearing upon the enterprise in contemplation, when the elder officer rose to look forth and see how time had been improved, and what was still left for their disposal, he announced to his startled companion that day-break had surprised them in the midst of their deliberations. To put the matter beyond question, he threw open the little shutter enough to admit the cold light against the walls.

It streamed into the apartment as the obstacle was removed, and threw around it, and all the objects it contained, that dull equivocal glare which always accompanies the sudden transition from darkness or lamp-light to the beams of morning. The tapers, already dim, faded to a sickly colour as the rays of day poured upon them, and the fire was desolately sinking in its ashes. But with a still more singular effect did the light fall upon the worn and anxious faces of those who had there sat out the weary night, in those high vigils that task the spirit and bear heavily upon the frame. There was the exhausted look—the pale brow, and the clouded eye. Their occu-

pation had been trying. It was the occupation of men who have undertaken a design fraught with important issues, and seriously involving the fortunes of a nation. Theirs had been an interchange of thought between the fiery spirit bent on base revenge, and ready for bloody and unlimited sacrifice, and the elevated soul that acknowledged no feeling paramount to its duty—between traitorous purpose and high resolve—between unprincipled hate and unqualified bravery. It can hardly seem strange that their deliberations were slow where their sympathies were so distant.

"This is indeed unfortunate," said the younger, at last, rising and looking where the horizon was already kindling with the coming sun,—“this looks rather foully upon the enterprise.”

"There is no alternative till night gathers again," said the other, with the readiness of one who seemed prepared for all events. "You must remain in concealment, sir—the obscurity of evening will favour your retreat, and crown matters to our wishes. Meanwhile, under the protection of your pass, you may remain secure within the American posts."

"No," returned his companion, "you will not urge it—you must allow me to remain without the posts. I will remain where I am, till I can take the boat."

"But this neutral ground will be our ruin."

answered the elder officer; "you are aware that every rod of it is trampled daily by scouts on either side—our retreat must be immediate."

"I ask security of you, sir," replied the other in a calm but decided tone, "as near to the American lines as you will—but not within them. Even at this crisis my feelings lead me to urge this request. I will consent to abide only within *reach* of your protection—otherwise I remain here with myself, and good chance to befriend me."

"There is no time to lose," answered his companion, after a moment's consideration, "I think it may be done—your request shall be complied with,"—and with an air of dissatisfaction he thus closed the interview, and led the way into the morning light. Objects were still indistinctly visible around them, and the land yet lay in deep shadow under the hills. In a few moments they were prepared for departure. "We must return here to-night," said he who had last spoken, "but at present we must say, 'good horses bear us; and yonder mist is all in our favour.'" So saying, they set forward, over the uneven ground, at a heedless and rapid rate. When the British adjutant was secreted that day it matters not to tell. It is enough to know that he lay concealed within the American lines, and that the faith of the American officer was forgotten or disregarded.

That crafty and evil-minded personage was not formed to appreciate the high and honourable principles which influenced his coadjutor; and when he heard him deny all considerations of danger, and saw him reject what to him appeared to be the only sensible proposal that could be started under the emergency, he could refer his reluctance to no higher motive than obstinacy or fear. He did not conceive that one who had gone so far in the legerdemain of war as to become an instrument of communicating with a disaffected officer of the enemy, in stealth and darkness, would hesitate to compromise his honour as easily as himself did his principles; and he conceived it impossible that one who was deemed fit to become the channel of treasonous confidence, should revolt at the thought of becoming a spy. It was therefore with impatience that he listened to his objections; and when he found he could not shake his resolution by appealing to his selfish considerations, he abruptly concluded with those hasty promises which, when he made, he coolly determined never to fulfil.

The lingering day passed on. The sun at last sunk behind those hills whose freedom was already bartered for, and its farewell light played on the sentinel's bayonet, as he traversed the walls of that fortress whose surrender had been prompted by hate and purchased by gold. The traitor looked towards them and smiled.

His revengeful spirit was now reconciled. His bitter passions had feasted themselves on his already perfected retaliation. He saw glorious reward for his treachery, and hopeless confusion to the black ingratitude which had called down this more glorious vengeance. He saw himself advanced for his perfidy, and the cause of liberty, stricken here to the heart with a Brutus-like virtue, by one who had bravely fought for it, but who gloried more than all in the hellish satisfaction with which he inflicted the blow. "I will bid you farewell to-morrow," said he, turning his kindling eyes towards the mountains, as these thoughts hurried through his bosom; "but I will leave a new standard to wave over your forests and waters."

It was now night; and again the lonely dwelling without the posts, which I have mentioned, became the scene of secret movements. The British officer was now alone in the same secluded apartment where he had passed the preceding night in busy and trying duties. The appearance of the room had changed essentially. The table was swept of its contents, and a few burnt fragments of paper were scattered upon the ashes. There was no fire, and a solitary lamp shed a feeble light from the hearth where it stood, against the walls, where it flickered and flared as the wind stirred the flame. The officer was now muffled in his surtout, so that his dress was

hidden as before under the covering it afforded. He seemed like one prepared for travel, but waiting the arrival of something before his departure. As with measured steps and in thoughtful mood he paced the floor, he sometimes appeared to recollect himself, and would stop and listen, as though he were expecting the sudden approach of another. He then resumed his tread. But every succeeding pause became longer, and accompanied with an expression of anxiety which argued a delay in the expected person, that could not be accounted for, as well as apprehension in the mind of the listener. At length, finding there was no sound to be heard in the dreary stillness, his own footfall became wearisome, and he seated himself at the table, and clasping his hands wearily before him, gazed with much earnestness upon a beautiful and brilliant ring that glittered upon his finger. A kind of melancholy expression went over his face as his full and steady eye rested on the jewel, and his intelligent features brightened for a moment, as milder memories flowed back upon him. It was one of those looks that the sensitive heart sends up to the countenance, when the recollection of those things that have gladdened it, revisits it again,—like the gentle wind that stirs deep fountains in fair solitude. It was the look that plays round the fine brow and the fine lip, when associations that are tender and dear are called mournfully from their

slumbers, to hallow some of the desolate or desperate moments of our life.

The youthful officer still continued to gaze upon the brilliant, and sometimes closed his eyes, like one lost in the depth of his meditations. He then drew forth a small tablet and busied himself in alternately turning its leaves, and perusing lines that seemed to command an unusual interest, from the long time and pensive manner in which he hung over them. Once, with a rapid pencil, he traced a few words, but immediately closed its pages, returned it to its place, and reclined his head thoughtfully upon the table. His mind was still occupied with far and pleasing remembrances, when he was roused from his reverie by the trampling of a horse, and the immediate approach of steps towards the house and then along the passage leading to the room in which he was seated. The door opened, and the American commander hastily entered, with his brow contracted to an unusual frown, his lips firmly compressed, and his whole mien indicative of suppressed passion and disappointment. "You have been detained," said the other, rising suddenly, "and I began to imagine some unforeseen difficulty—but you see I am ready."—"But others are not," returned his companion, "and there *is* an unforeseen difficulty. We seem determined to try our inventive talent as well as our temper, this time."

"What has happened now?" said the Englishman quickly, but with collectedness—"must we make up for desperate measures—or is it merely delay that startles you?"—"Both, major, both," replied the officer—"your steps must be direct and decided. The hazard must be run. I feel that delay in the execution of this scheme is worse than death. Every minute of delay is a year to my hurrying hopes. You must embark to-night—it is impossible that you return to New York by ship."

"Impossible!" returned the other, in astonishment—"but I will make it possible—I will be on board this instant."

"I would to God it were practicable," answered his companion—"I would to God it were so for you—for me—for the cause—but this is out of the question—the vessel cannot be reached in safety."

"This must not be," was the reply—"I can reach the ship as easily as I came from it—you speak of no new danger, sir, and if there be any, I can only say, I am ready to face it as I am—and if it be a desperate case we must take desperate measures to meet it." "Such was the remedy, sir, I was about to propose, and which I must eventually urge upon you," returned the other—"the case is desperate, as there is no boat to put off, and the measure must now be desperate, as you must return to the British posts by land. You will per-

ceive the absolute necessity of this step when I inform you that in seeking for and arranging the means to convey you on board, I was told that the ship had dropped down the river so far that the boatmen now utterly refuse to row to her moorings. Some of our cannon were drawn to the shore and brought to bear upon her—and she was thus compelled to shift her position. Of this movement I was ignorant till it was too late to interpose, and now—the foul fates take their unstable souls!—these men conspire with this cursed mischance, to drive us to extremities. There is, therefore, but one course to be taken—and I submit to you whether there is room for a moment's hesitation or a moment's delay. I say, on, at once—let the plot speed—and your departure be instant."

The young Briton needed no spur to his bravery or his resolves. Neither was he a person to be effectually influenced by the hasty opinions; or urgent representations of another where his course was plain, and his duty pointed the way. His sense of that duty was superior to the loudest argument. But on the present occasion there seemed to be peculiar weight and meaning in the reasons he had listened to, and their tendency was to give additional influence to his own convictions. There appeared to be no resource open but the one solitary step which had been suggested. He was aware that now the plan was

perfected, to delay its execution was weakness—and worse than that, was impolitic and dangerous. He at once saw the hazard to which this unexpected issue subjected him, but with a spirit that threw aside all considerations of his individual fate, he made up his heart boldly to encounter it. If he succeeded, it would give a brilliancy to the adventurous deed that fortune compelled him to undertake—if he failed, he would be supported by the recollection that he failed in fulfilling one of those desperate duties which the chance of war sometimes devolves upon the most honourable as well as the boldest. During these reflections, his companion stood gazing intently upon the cheerless hearth, and often slowly passed his hand across his brow, thus throwing into deeper shade his harsh and varying features; he turned as the younger officer addressed him.

“I believe you are in the right, general; it is a heavy chance, but I see the fitness of the course you urge upon me. This plan must not, shall not prove abortive; the business must not end here, nor must it cool. The step, dark as you say it is, must be taken. I must take measure of this fair ground between us and our garrison, and see what a fleet horse can do in an exigency. It must be done, the case requires it, and I am ready to proceed.”

“Not yet,” returned the other, brightening, “not yet, speedy as we must be. That dress will betray you; you must become half repub-

lican to keep me in countenance, and change this rich uniform for the sober coat of a yeoman."

"Never," was the firm and serious answer; "I will return even as I came; and if I fall, I would fall in mine own harness. It is needless to waste words or time on such things. This garment will afford me ample disguise. Besides, by my pass, I am a soldier on public service from this spot to our outposts. Indeed, my dress will defy common scrutiny."

"But it is against more than common scrutiny I wish you to guard," answered his companion.

"Press me no further," said the other, "but let us to horse, and commend each other to the night."

"Be it so, then, since so you are resolved," returned his companion, as he led the way to the door; "headlong and unsuspecting boy!" muttered he, "be the issue of this step on your own head—and as for mine, why—I have long since set my life upon a cast, and if it turn against me, I shall not be the only loser in the game;" and they issued together in the dim moonlight. The night looked favourable for their purpose. The clouds lay in a still and compact mass against the heavens, save in that part of the horizon where the "pale queene" was ascending. As it was, she would soon be veiled, and an uncertain light, at best, would then leave objects half visible over the landscape. One full star blazed in

the west, and was just sinking over one of the soaring summits. "There is the beacon of our good fortune—see where it smiles upon our enterprize," said the American officer, pointing towards the planet. "May it not prove a poetic omen that good fortune still brightens over that fortress, while thick clouds hang over us?" returned the Englishman, doubtfully, "but you see it is gone!" continued he, quickly changing his tone—"even while we speak it is gone!"

"So sink the prospects and hopes of America!" said the other, as he turned away with a withering smile. "But here stand our horses, and seem to chide us by their uneasiness—let us to their backs, for the sooner we part the quicker comes our meeting. I can only say good night, and God speed ye." They accordingly mounted, and the graceful Englishman, bowing with inimitable ease, and in fine military style, waved his hand in parting salute, and immediately put his horse into a rapid gallop. The person he left remained there gazing after him, till his form was lost in the mist of a valley into which he had plunged. He then turned his horse in another direction, and soon disappeared among the hills.

How it sped with that young horseman, and how he bore on his way, it now remains to tell. The animal he bestrode was fleet and powerful, and went forward as though he was familiar

with the path. There was light enough to bring into view the dark outline of the country he traversed, and to give him a vivid impression of its wildness and variety. Here the road wound among rocks and woods that clustered round and above him in every frowning and fantastic form which nature loves to display in her solitary places, and here it ran far off into plains, where it was lost in obscurity. Now he directed his rapid course into deep and dark ravines, and now mounted lofty ridges, where every sound that was going upon the night wind seemed to come up to him. Here he shot along its dark side, till the high land again sunk in the low land, and its slight-worn path again precipitated itself into woods and glens. Though the movement of the rider was too rapid for deep and calm reflections, still his was not a mind to remain passive in a situation which, if not actually poetical, had still enough of the wild and adventurous about it to tinge it with romance. It was a situation calculated to produce powerful and even tumultuous excitement, in a bosom shaken by strong feelings and trained to grand and startling associations. It was one to make the heart throb loud and the eye glance quickly. It was fitted to call up the spirits of imagination, and to throw over those minds that have owned, and love to own, their peculiar influences, that spell which has bound them in their boyhood, and which to this time

they had only read of, but never realized. Upon a spirit constituted like that of our solitary horseman, these associations poured themselves with an intensity that was new to him. The consciousness of his situation thrilled to his soul; but there was a sense of the high daring, the hazardous nature, and the wild uncertainty of the important service he was engaged in, which lent a nameless interest to the chance, and even gave attraction to the danger. Sometimes the possible issue would shoot across his fancy, and her ready pencil sketched upon the very air before him a sad picture of premature death and weeping friends—bright ambition expiring in its ashes—young glory sinking in dishonour! Then his thoughts sprung to his country, beyond the seas, and for an instant he saw those that he gloried in and loved, and the recollection of danger vanished before the vision of an honourable return and a welcome of smiles and praises. These momentary illusions served somewhat to beguile the way, but were not strong enough to draw the young soldier from his self-recollection. There was enough around him to warn him, at times, that he was in the country of an enemy, and on a path beset with difficulties, and guarded by suspicion. Sometimes the lonely cry of the sentinel, or the stroke of a drum, as he drew nigh an outpost, suddenly recalled his wandering attention; and his noble animal reared his head and

pricked his ears as the sound broke on the stillness, while his own heart beat audibly as he reined up to listen. Then, when the challenge was answered and the pass-word given, it seemed as though a new flood of life was poured through his heart while he bounded forward on his way, and left the echoes of "All's well!" far behind him on the wind. The rush of the night air by his fevered face—the undiminished vigour of his horse—and the recollection of all he had thus far surmounted, served to inspire him with fresh animation; and he looked back on every post passed as a victory won. "Forward! forward bravely, as you have done, my noble fellow!" said he, to his charger, "and we will come in view of the spitz, ere many hours have followed on *reveille*."

Alternately exercised by feelings of such opposite excitement, he rode out the long watches of the night. The moon went down and morning began to redden the east with her coming. The situation of the rider became more perilous as he advanced, and he felt the necessity of exercising all the self-command as well as all the caution that he was master of. He perceived that additional observation was bestowed upon him at each remove. The examination of his credentials was more deliberate, and his person was more closely scanned as the morning light brought it into fuller survey. Still he passed forward

without suspicion—but he became particularly sensible of the vigilance of his enemies, and their resoluteness in guarding every avenue, where approach might be anticipated, or through which any impression might be made upon their positions above. Nor were the steps taken, or movements made by the American party along the banks of the Hudson, merely precautionary. Scouts might frequently be seen traversing the country, to prevent the execution of schemes of depredation or secret intercourse, which the foe and the disaffected were not backward to attempt, and it often happened that something in the nature of an onset followed when the soldiers fell in with such marauders in their acts of foray.”

So far as such movements might be called military, they were sometimes made from the encampment at North Castle, then a post of importance held by the Americans. A principal object of the scouting parties was to cut off the communication of the North River post, and come down on the cowboys as they swept that way with their supplies. At the time I speak of, such excursions were common, for the occasion that demanded them was of daily occurrence. But I must return to my story. The sun was now well risen, and threw his broad golden light far over the landscape, gladdening the hills, and brightening the waters. A deep flush shot through the wood

tops, beneath which our traveller pursued his lonely course, and the dewy branches shook down their huge glittering drops across his path, as the early wind began to stir among them. As he issued into open ground, the roadside sparkled with a thousand gems, brilliant emblems, as he thought, of his prosperity and his fortunes! but like them, alas! though he knew it not, they were at that moment withering and vanishing under an influence stern as fate, and from which there was no possibility of escaping. But now, as the fresh air, mingling with the healthful exhalations of the morning, circled around him, and reinvigorated his lately sinking spirits, and when he strained his view towards the point of his destination, and fancied he could almost see the flag of his country waving in welcome to his weary coming, when he felt a consciousness of security stealing upon and gradually mastering the painful sense of danger by which he had been so long and so constantly exercised, his thoughts and feelings at once, and irresistibly, concentrated.

Success, the one thing he had hoped for, and prayed for, for which he had trembled alternately with fear and with delight, for which life interposed, and honour and good fame besought in the tears that became a soldier—success, the only thing he now asked of Heaven, brilliant success sat on his helm, and spoke on his brow, and in his fine lip, and his

eloquent eye. His heart expanded, his countenance lighted with the warmth of hope, and his very arteries in their loud pulsations seemed like voices, passing the good watchword of safety from the joyous citadel to the outposts. Still as hill and vale were left behind him, his assurances grew stronger, and his doubts disappeared like the young dew he had just gazed on—till at length, so certain was he of the vicinity of the British lines, all apprehensions subsided, and a delightful calm settled upon the deep waters of his spirit. It was like the halcyon descending upon a mirrored sea.

Day had now advanced so far, and the conviction that toil was nearly over, and danger well nigh past, had become so effectual with our rider, that both policy and pleasure caused him to relax his speed; and he travelled on with an ease and almost carelessness of motion to which he had before been a stranger. There was even a gaiety mingled ~~his~~ self with his contemplations, and a beaming smile went over his face, and a flush of delighted satisfaction spread to his throbbing temples, as his eye glanced perchance on that little gem that sparkled in the sunlight, and thence over the fields that lay before him. He saw here and there the blue smoke of the husbandman's home, as it curled into the clear morning air, and at times he rode gently by the rude yeoman himself, as he went on his

quick and silent way from house to house casting his inquiring eyes for an instant on traveller and horse, and seeming to say whoever rode in that direction passed not unread or unremembered. But the hour of alarm had passed by—the hazard was over—there was no room for longer apprehension.

At this moment the destiny of the adventurer was sealed. His dream of enchantment was broken—his best, last, bright hope was blasted for ever.

It was on the borders of Tarrytown, while day was yet early, that he descried before him three persons loitering beneath the huge trees that overhung the road side. Their appearance was sudden, and startled him from his pleasing security. As he drew near a single glance convinced him that they were awaiting his approach; and movements on their part manifested the excitement of uncommon and unexpected attention. There was no possibility of passing unquestioned, and his immediate determination was to dispel suspicion, by riding up to meet and salute them, with bold and gay demeanour. That they were armed was now beyond question. The rapid glistening of steel, as they shifted their positions while watching his approach—and the peculiar air of preparation among them, gave token of men who had the means of challenging every stranger with effect, and who had every disposition to challenge. Their object was now

apparent—for as our traveller reined up and addressed the party with a degree of hilarity and unconcern—his fine countenance brightening with benevolence—and in a tone of eager animation bade “God bless them,” his bridle was seized and a polished rifle glittered at his side. It was a moment of terrible trial. The brave and fearless might blench under it. As it was, that brave and fearless spirit lost its mastery. In the confusion of the moment its self-command was betrayed, and a few words placed it beyond the hope of recovery. “Pray God, my friends,” said he hastily, stooping among them—“pray God you are of our party.” “We are from below,” was the immediate answer, as they gathered round him—“And so am I,” followed on the echo of the words, and fixed the fate of the speaker for ever. It was too late—he saw his error—but he saw it, as does the rider who, having trusted to the goodness and generous speed of his animal in a dark and dangerous way, beset with enemies, suddenly finds himself unexpectedly in the midst of his foes, unarmed and unprepared, from the very rapidity which he had hoped might have insured his escape. A cold smile passed over the faces round him, as they exchanged glances, and, as pale as death, he obeyed the order to dismount and surrender himself to the custody of his captors. The hope of liberty, however, was not so to be given up. There is a spirit in man which

grasps at possibilities, when certainty, with all its golden promises, has vanished, and the chance of life is left to struggle with some solitary and doubtful event. If we cannot appeal with success to the generosity and sympathies of our fellow-men in extremities, we sometimes hope to bend them to our purposes, and even to bring them to a forgetfulness of duty, by applying ourselves to their interests and their passions. This is the exertion of despair—it is the trial which desperation makes to steal in by some foul and secret entrance, when every attempt at the citadel by the nobler avenues of the heart has been turned back with indignation.

There was but one resource, therefore, which fortune seemed to have left within the power of our traveller—and like a “soul in bail,” he felt himself called to the despairing effort which it inspired. He would tempt their avarice.

He then announced himself as an officer of distinction—an Adjutant-General in the British service, entrusted with business of high import—and urged the necessity of his immediate departure for New York. His detention was pregnant with difficulties, and his arrival anxiously awaited in the capital. This disclosure was accompanied with all the eloquent expression which he could throw in his manner, and, as he ended, he drew from his side a watch of splendid workmanship and material,

and held it broad in his hand before his attentive listeners. They gazed on it coldly as they leaned upon their bright rifles—"Put me to horse, instantly," said he, "and this shall be yours—nay, more," continued he, with vehemence, as he observed them shake their heads in disdain at his offers—"this, and this," drawing handfuls of gold from his pockets—"even this—and ten times the amount, shall be yours, only let me once more put spurs to my horse—nay—answer me—take it—with the promise of my country for thousands more,—you cannot hesitate." But they did hesitate—they did more—they stood firm. The trinket and the gold still lay in the outspread hands of the prisoner, untouched and hardly looked upon. The eyes of his guards were glancing upon each other. There was no need of words, where there was so much of more than Castilian integrity. "Put up your gold," said one of those soldiers, "it may find a better market—we have no want of it here—you have taken from our country half the joys it would purchase—and as for luxuries, we have none—put up your gold—and keep your water for your high company over the water—we keep time by the sun."

Astonished and confounded, again he held forth the heap of coin. The mass glittered in the sunshine, but it could not dazzle the plain undaunted soldiers who surrounded him. "But ye shall live to your hearts' content—ye

shall have fortunes and honours with us—ye shall have everything ye wish for—only put me to that good black charger, and bid me God speed. Do ye hold back?—why can ye hesitate?”—“It is in vain,” said he who had last spoken, with a wave of his hand—“look ye, sir,—this ground we stand on here is our country. We must not betray it. That you should want to escape from us, is well enough—but ye have mistaken your men—and as for fortunes and honours, our honour must be to remain honest soldiers—and we are willing to go along with the fortunes of our land—you will please to follow.”

“This good black horse must come within the bars,” said one of the party, as he led the animal forward, and commanded his rider once more to pass in. He was accordingly conducted so far within the thicket, that the presence of the soldiers, as well as all their movements, were screened from observation. The unfortunate prisoner remained silent and passive in the hands of his captors, and while they exchanged their short and half-suppressed sentiments in his hearing, preparatory to their search, and during the operation, their gay and reckless inuendoes struck upon his mind with a sense of pain and anguish that was almost insupportable. It was a feeling allied to that which a spirit of extreme sensibility endures when subjected to the harsh, rude trials of a world that laughs at, and mocks it, alike in its

hours of fine elevation and harrowing depression—like that by which high feeling is tortured when it comes in contact with the cold, paralyzing severities of life, in the shape of unrelenting duty, which knows nothing of sympathy, and mere force which despises the thought of a sensitive mind or a suffering heart.

"This looks like playing our cards to some effect," said one of the party to his companions — as the hopeless gentleman stood waiting the orders of his enemies. "Yes," said the other, "it looks like to turn out a fortunate game enough, though our comrade who stood sentry must have the honour of winning it, but I told ye," continued he, laying his hand on the shoulder of the other, "it was best to keep one rifle upright, for fear of what might ride within its range." "Nay," said the third, who had not yet spoken, "if you think this has anything to do with the matter of the cards I say it counts one most capitally; and if our good dame's morning milk and an early hour send such prisoners to our care, I should say our scouts are more profitable than all the battles we are like to fight. So, sir, with your leave, I will divest you of this garment."

"It was a surrender without conditions; our right to plunder is unquestionable," said the other, "but discovery comes hard, I think." "This trump settles the game!" cried the first,

as he ended the search and held up a package of letters, which he had drawn from the silk stocking of the unfortunate captive. "Now, then, you have all," said he, "as he folded his arms calmly before those he addressed, and looked on them with a steady eye, but a blanched cheek, "all, as God is true, the treason is out, now lead forward."

During the conversation that had passed between the soldiers, our young prisoner had stood in a state of complete subjection before them, apparently lost equally to his misfortune and himself; and it was not till the discovery of the secreted papers, and the consequent exclamation, that he was sufficiently recalled to himself to pass particular attention upon the liberties taken with his person. So completely was he overwhelmed by the misery of his sudden fate, that he remained insensible to events the bare consideration of which, a few moments before, would have carried to his mind confusion and alarm. To describe the sensations that hurried through his bosom, the recollections that rushed over him, and the fearful, terrible anticipations that rose up in those troubled moments; to describe the abandonment of feeling with which he stood there, the pale, helpless being of crushed hopes and ruined life, is more than can be told, or if told, can never be conceived of.

The search had been satisfactory and severe. The generous, brave demeanour of the young

captive impressed his foes with a respect and regard that insensibly glided into compassion as they gazed on him. When he found himself in their custody without hope of escape, or prospect of averting his destiny, his manner became that of an ardent mind, reduced to complete surrender under the failure of every honourable resource. Insult, therefore, was as far as injury from the hearts and lips of those who detained him; and if, in the performance and prosecution of their duty, their language manifested an exhilaration with their good fortune, every word addressed to the subject of their interest was uttered in kindness, and the firm but respectful tone of generous and high-minded enemies.

Having accomplished their object, the prisoner was led out and ordered to mount his horse. He was permitted to ride a short distance a-head of his keepers. Slowly and despondingly he passed on. His head dropped on his breast, and deep and stirring thoughts were busy in his rankling and agitated bosom. With fixed eyes and a heaving heart, he rode forward and pondered upon his fate. It was written in letters of blood before him. He thought of his present condition; there was no retreat. He thought upon the future; there was no relief in the dark picture of his coming days. Few there were to be, and he felt they would be few. There was no hope of lengthening them out beyond the common period of a

felon's probation. Possibility fled before the discovery of his person and his title, and the black blank of life spread out before him with a terror next to that of annihilation. As he rode, the big cold sweat streamed down his pallid face, exhibiting terrible proof of a tried but still a proud spirit. As he faintly wiped it from his brow, the deep working of his imagination would drive it again to his countenance in large drops, to tell how much he suffered, and how fearfully he looked forward. The lone abstraction of the unfortunate prisoner was not broken in upon by his guard; and it was a striking mark of the unqualified respect which true greatness, and fair honour, whether in prosperity or trouble, is invariably sure to inspire, to see this young, gallant, but hopeless personage, left to the unobstructed indulgence of his solitary reflections at such an instant when his capture was of the utmost moment, and his escape from his guard would have been of disastrous consequence to the cause and country which they had so faithfully and so fortunately served.

The prisoner himself spake not a word. He merely took the short and simple directions of the scouts, and bent his slow sad steps towards the outpost, where he was told he was to be surrendered to the commander of their parties. On receiving this information, his recollection seemed to return, and an expression of momentary satisfaction seemed to brighten his

face; but it instantly subsided, and he only begged them to hasten forward, and deliver him, as soon as might be, to his fate.

As he was mounted, and his guard on foot, their progress was naturally slow. To him it was tedious, and seemed to be interminable. In addition to this evil, it became necessary to take a desolate and unfrequented path, to reach their position undiscovered and unsuspected. They now issued into clear ground—and from the movements of his guards, who suddenly advanced from behind him to his side, and the free and unsuppressed tones in which they conferred together, our prisoner deemed that they were in the vicinity of the post where he was to be surrendered. Nor was he mistaken, for in a few moments one of the scouts went rapidly forward, as they were ascending a small mound, and disappeared below the brow of the hill. As they rose, he again joined them, and they were now in full view of the position to which they were hastening. Urging forward with all the speed they could command, they soon entered the lines with their prisoner. He was immediately dismounted and quietly conducted into the presence of the general officer. He entered with the firm step of a soldier, and his changed though still collected countenance alone manifested signs of disquiet. It was not possible for such a spirit to conceal such powerful feelings. The story, however, was soon told

by his captors:—he had been taken as a spy, and as such he now stood before their superior, to abide his decision and disposal. This said, he was left alone with the commander of the post.

It was at this moment, that the recollection of his companion in treachery, and the thought of his inevitable fate, should he remain unapprised of his arrest, rushed upon the prisoner. He must be saved!—and it must be a desperate effort to rescue him. It is enough to say, that by unequalled artifice, operating with the singular security of his unsuspecting enemy, he succeeded; and that upon full and unhesitating confession made, at last, before the leader of the scouting parties, the same confession, together with the circumstances of his capture, were laid before the commander-in-chief, and the unfortunate Englishman was ordered into strict custody, to await his destiny under the stern rules of war. Left to himself, his ardent and sensitive mind concentrated itself upon his forlorn condition. In the utter silence of his imprisonment, fancy went to and fro, arrayed in all her tender and terrific colours. Home—friends—and honour—suspense, death, and ignominy passed in palpable personification before him, until his soul heaved like the troubled deep, when the storm is on it in power, and the light of heaven is withdrawn for ever.

In this peopled solitude—this fearful still-

ness we shall leave him till the voice of martial justice called him to his last trial. We return to him, whom our prisoner might well regard as the author of his fate, and who was now waiting the issue of his treasonous purposes, in the strong post which he had already devoted as the first sacrifice to his unrelenting spirit. It was nearly night. The day had set goldenly; and its last beams blazed on the summits that soared round the fortress, and faintly tinged the tall staff from which floated the beautiful ensign of liberty with its stars and bands. The waters blushed in the calm reflection of the glowing hills, while in the deep shadow of the highlands they lay dark as futurity. On that midnight shadow the lowering eye of the commander rested. His spirit found something congenial in the murky silence and frowning blackness that centred there. The mild beauties of that scene—the kindling glories of the hills and waters had no charms for a heart like his. It was lost to the charities of life—how could it find delight in the kindness of nature. It was abandoned to the reveries of revenge—what could it not find in that deep shadow to revel in.

The triumph was now almost at hand—there was but one step more, and it was done. The perfidy was then developed—the crime then rose to the importance of completion. His heaving bosom felt still a small void—but it

was fast filling up—and he gloried as he thought how soon

the head and front of his offending

would be unveiled to his confused and astonished country. At such a fervid moment he rose flushed and agitated from his seat, and strode through his low apartment in the height of his satisfaction, while a grim smile went over his face, already kindling with the glow of perfected hopes and perfected revenge. Darkness stole into the room—and still he trod the floor unconscious of the lapse of time; and in his excited fancy he already saw his companions in this dangerous hazard bounding happily away in the exulting buoyancy of hope and delight, and entering the garrison of his friends swelling with the important tidings of his mission. Full of these high fancies, he at last seated himself at a small window that looked out upon the deep Hudson, that now lay below him in stillness and indistinctness. “A few hours,” muttered he to himself, “a few hours, and all this fair scene shall be changed. These waters shall be broken and ploughed by the boats of hostile ships, and these heights shall be echoing to strange sounds. This very heart of their hopes shall be reached—and it shall bleed to its core. Ay—sound on,” cried he, as the lone bugle wound its beautiful note, “a few hours, and the hoarse trumpet shall drown your fair voice in its roar, till an armed host

is round this wretched people, and their white hearts are confounded." The moon was now rising full and unclouded above the highlands, and its beams fell upon the stronghold in calm and brilliant beauty. As she came up, a slight breeze began to move among the hills, and to stir the huge folds of the ensign that hung over the walls, till its broad stripes floated out lazily on the night air. A dismal smile went over his face. "Another night," said he, "shall see another banner in your place, and that shall be torn to steep in the wounds of those that fall beneath it. Those stars must come down—and they shall come down. I have no love of them—they have been evil ones to me. But ye shall no longer auger desperately of me. Ye shall light me this once to victory at least—and in that ye shall see the fulfilment of my own destiny and the ruin of this accursed land." "All's well," went round the ramparts. He listened. "Yes," cried he, "it is well now—but it shall not be so long—it shall be either the better or the worse ere many hours, or my arm shall be palsied, or my reason lost. There shall be another watchword upon these rocks—and though they are among the mountains they shall not remain in such proud security if my hate can keep pace with my faith. Yes—yes—I have ye in my hands, and ye shall find I know how sweet it is to be ungrateful." Such was the course of thought, now mounting into

soliloquy, and now dying into the sullen murmur of discontent, as it alternately agitated the bosom of the speaker. He at length became silent; but the ever varying motion of his lips would have convinced the beholder that his feelings were exercised by unholy as well as unusual excitement.

He rose, and paced the apartment with unequal steps, stopping frequently to listen, and sometimes approaching even to the door in his anxiety. But there was short time for his foreboding, good or bad. Some one was heard advancing in haste, and a soldier entered, presented a carefully sealed note, and was about retiring. But the eye of the master was quicker than his steps; and ere the subaltern had reached the door, the wary traitor had caught the import of the letter, and exclaimed in confusion, "Stay! man the barge instantly—death if you delay—fly!" Then lowering his voice and muttering to himself as the man retired, "This looks like danger—perdition rest upon it, it will be a failure!—taken—captured—so near home too!—fool—madman!—why didn't he spring in spite of their bullets? the chance was a good one!—Folly—folly—this is desperate indeed," continued he, as he hurryingly thrust his pistols into his bosom, and threw his cloak about his shoulders—"but one bold step must save me and save all"—as he stood at the entrance of the apartment, he hesitated.

"Nay"—she must find her way to me—as my wife she will be protected—as a woman, at least, she will be safe—and these small coins," murmured he, as his eye fell on some few paltry pieces, "these may not be left behind"—as he spoke, he swept them from the table to his pocket, and drawing his beaver low over his brow, departed with hasty steps. Muffled in his cloak, he passed within the shadow of the tents, and sprung along the steep path that led to the rocks below, where the barge was already in waiting. His motions betrayed the state of his conscience, and he seemed himself to have forgotten he was commander there, in the stern consciousness of his traitorous designs. Arrived at the water's edge, he leaped on board the boat, and ordered the oarsmen to pull down the river, at the top of their strength. It was but a short time before the post he had deserted faded in obscurity, and the gleam of bayonets along its ramparts was lost in the mist as it curled up from the river. The boatmen, continuing to ply their oars with diligence, soon bore their freight of treason beyond the immediate scene of danger, and by the time the commander-in-chief entered the garrison he had fled from in terror, the object of his signal indignation was within full view of the British ship, from which the unfortunate young Englishman had debarked to meet his ruin. In another moment he was alongside, and upon

deck—upon the gun-deck of his country's enemy—an outcast and a deserter! Flushed with the success of his escape, he declared himself a renegado to his bargemen, and held forth promise of splendid reward, would they join him in his defection. But the same untainted virtue which their noble countrymen had so recently displayed on the outposts, before the tempting offers of foreign gold again manifested itself in these heroic fellows, even in the very grasp of their foes, when brilliant hopes of aggrandisement were whispered them, and their commander by his example first taught them how to be traitors.

We now return to our unfortunate captive. The wise and the brave had sat in judgment upon him. His case had been the subject of high and deliberate and affecting consideration. The circumstances of his capture—his unqualified confessions—his earnest, though dignified requests, had been maturely but sternly weighed. The nobleness of his nature, the lofty disinterestedness of his demeanour, the winning amenity of his manners, the importance of his rank, were all appreciated as they should be by soldiers—tried soldiers—when sitting under the severe sanctions of a war-council. When they issued from that council, the desolate doom of the prisoner was irrevocably fixed. He was to die. Before another sun should go down, his ties on earth were to be severed. Meanwhile the subject of

this melancholy decision was awaiting the result with all the calm and elevated feelings of a generous and undaunted soldier. He was ignorant of what might be the issue; but his knowledge of the rules of war led him so far to anticipate it, that he had in some degree become reconciled to his probable doom, from the very hopelessness of escaping from it. The agitation consequent upon the suddenness of his arrest had subsided; and though his saddened mind reverted again and again to the scenes and associations we have seen him cling to from the beginning, yet there was less poignancy in his recollections, and less acuteness in the trials of his high and masculine sensibilities.

There was yet one consolation that bore up the prisoner, even when he thought upon the memory he should bequeath to the world and to posterity. He hoped and trusted that he should meet an honourable death, and that his country would never blush at his epitaph. He had asked—he had besought, with a bursting heart, that if he must die, he might die like a man of honour. He had addressed the American chieftain, in proud petition, for this last little boon of the condemned soldier. He had addressed him in all the beautiful eloquence of his lofty mind, urged by a heart almost breaking in the intensity of its emotions. Need it be said that he roused all the sympathies of a bosom, kindling with godlike

purposes, and alive to every heavenly charity that can sanctify our nature? Can it be said that the heart he appealed to would not have bid him God speed, even with a father's blessing, to the arms of his country and his home, did that heart beat alone for himself, or did the fate of the victim involve only the single destiny of that great and devoted being? But there were stern duties arrayed against the kind spirit of forbearance and forgiveness. The voice of his suffering land was imperious with him who guarded her in council, and led her in battle. That voice now called for justice, and demanded that the crisis should not be forgotten. It was the cry of liberty, and the sacrifice must not be withheld; it was the summons of justice, and his death must accord with the crime of which the prisoner stood convicted.

During the days of his confinement, not a murmur escaped the captive in the presence of his guard. A dignified composure distinguished his deportment—and the serenity of his mind was depicted in the tranquillity of his countenance. The last hours of his solitude were employed in those holy offices which friendship claims of us when the sands of life are running low. There were a few words to be said—a few prayers to be uttered for those who were now dreaming of him on his path to glory. There were a few sad, sacred words to be breathed to a fond mother—to sisters that

loved him—to some, perhaps, for whose sake alone life was yet desirable, and to whose bosom he would now, as a last duty to himself, commit the reputation that was dearer to him than the air of Heaven.

It was in the midst of this latest and holiest occupation that the prisoner was interrupted by the entrance of the guard officer. He came to announce the hour of execution. The young soldier looked up hastily from his paper. His eyes were fixed a moment upon his visitor—then slowly fell again—and he passed his hand across his brow, without betraying the least emotion—"Is it indeed so soon?" said he—"then I must hasten."

Firm in the belief that he was now to die like a soldier, he felt the weight of his misfortune passing from his spirit. As he was relieved of this iron load, an unnatural elasticity seemed to be imparted to his bosom. His heart beat almost to suffocation, and the tumultuous motion of that fountain of his system certainly manifested an extraordinary degree of excitement. His last wish had been granted—his last hope was about to be realized—he was to find an honourable grave. Even that was enough to be thankful for. A few years, at best, and the same destiny would be his. "The pang," thought he, "is but the common one that man is heir to—"

* One touch of nature makes the whole world kin —

And if my young existence must be thus hastily sealed, thus severed for ever, let fate do her worst, and finish her work with speed"—and he paced the apartment with an unflinching step, and a lofty and unbending air.

The silence that had been observed by the commander-in-chief towards the respectful but ardent solicitations of the prisoner had led him to augur favourably of his success. His requests had not, indeed, passed unheeded—they had sunk deep—they had touched the finest and tenderest chords that ever vibrate in the bosom of virtue and bravery—they had appealed to the master feeling of a great heart—and they wrought upon it with a living power. The solicitation was listened to with a deepening interest—but that noble delicacy that actuates and animates none but elevated minds, forbade the answer. To grant the prayer was impossible—such was the iron law of those who came up to battle—to deny it was a sorrowful duty; and it was equally a trial to the soul of a generous enemy to throw back a solitary denial, or to wound the spirit of a devoted prisoner, by recapitulating the story of his dishonour in justification of his sentence. It was ordained, therefore, that he should remain in ignorance of his doom. From that very uncertainty, the unfortunate victim was now drawing his last and only consolation. The guard officer had now returned to accom-

pany him forth, and we shall leave them together while we join the scene of preparation in which the spy was so soon to become conspicuous.

It was deep in the afternoon, when shadows threw themselves long over the earth, and the sun was about to sink into a thick dull mass of clouds, when movements preparatory to the execution began to manifest themselves within the post. There was hurrying to and fro along the lines—and sad faces went by continually, and downcast looks were seen there—and every countenance wore the livery of deep and sorrowful feeling. It was evident that something mournful was about to transpire. The soldiers paced along the esplanade with low words and rapid steps—and now and then a tear might be seen to glisten—it was but for a moment—in the eye of the veteran. A large detachment of troops was paraded, and many of the general officers were already on horseback. Great multitudes of people flocked in to witness the melancholy spectacle—but a grave silence pervaded the immense collection. With slow and struggling steps the confused and intermingled crowd of citizens and soldiers bent their way towards the appointed place, just beneath the brow of a green hill that sloped towards the river. There, clustered around the dim spot devoted to destruction, or sauntering over the adjacent ground, they awaited the approach of the unhappy victim.

When the prisoner was led out, each arm looked in that of a subaltern, his step was uncommonly firm, and his expression unusually calm, and even exhilarated. The eloquent blood glowed to his temples, and a bright smile of satisfaction beamed from his countenance on all whom he recognized. The thought of death was dealing powerfully but kindly with him; for he saw that an honourable end was to be his—that his dying prayer was about to be granted. He thought—and the reflection sent yet new vigour into his throbbing arteries—he thought that he saw some pledge of a kind and heroic memory in the sympathy that was breaking all around him, in the gaze of admiration that was fixed upon him, in the tearful eye, the agitated countenance, the respectful salutation, the sad farewell, and the low suppressed murmur as he passed on, as though something went by which it was sacrilege to disturb in its course through the thronging multitude. He saw the high tribute that was paid to his fortitude, in the silent look with which he was regarded; and he felt that his premature fate was not unwept even by his foes. Buoyed up by these lively demonstrations of feeling, he fancied himself a martyr in the cause he had undertaken to advance, and pressed forward with mounting emotions, as though in haste to seal his pilgrimage here, and commence the stainless career of his future fame. “The report,” thought he, “that lays

me low, will send forth an echo that shall never die."

The detachment with their prisoner had now reached the summit of the hill, and came suddenly in view of the ground which had been set apart for this distressing occasion. It was occupied by a gallows. With the rapidity of light every eye was turned upon the victim. His was fixed in frenzy on the dismal object that rose portentously out of the multitude. He spake not a word—some powerful, rending emotion had taken possession of his bursting bosom. His hand flew to his heart, one look of anguish passed like a shadow over his face, and he fell lifeless into the arms of his guards. There was no voice heard in that immense crowd—but a confused trampling, as of a vast concourse of people when they are rushing together.

* * * * *

The clouds had now cleared off from the horizon, and the sun was about going down, when the last rites were performed over the departed soldier. There was no pomp, or noise, or show. A small escort of troops marched quickly over the gravel, and stood before the door of the stone building from which the remains were to be carried. A single drum beat out a hollow note at distinct intervals, and the fife sung sharp and mournfully. The coffin was at length borne out; and with slow step, inverted bayonets, and downward eyes, the

procession moved on. Many who cared not to join, stood behind in silent contemplation; and many, out of idle curiosity, lingered round, scarcely knowing why they were there. Behind some low, white, desolate buildings, which would scarcely shelter it from the storms of winter, the solitary grave was dug. Round this the soldiers crowded in silence. On either side they leaned upon their muskets, and hardly a breath was heard as the book of prayer was opened, and the fervent supplication went up to heaven. The scene was singularly impressive. Immediately round the grave, in the rear of the soldiers, some stood wrapped in gloomy attention; others, still behind, were seen eagerly gazing over the shoulders of those who had closed up before them. Every cap was off, and every eye fixed. Still beyond, the sick were seen peeping out of the half-opened door; and women and boys stood, with arms crossed upon their bosoms, before the miserable huts from which they had just issued. There, there was no moving—no noise—no roving of the looks—all were bent upon the speaker, who stood on the brink of the cold grave, with his eye raised in adjuration to heaven, and calling on the Father of Spirits with an eloquence so full, so powerful, so commanding, that his very soul seemed to mount up with his words. He ended. Then came the hurrying of the ceremony. At the quick command of the officer, the coffin was lowered—

the guns were brought down—the steel rung—and in a moment ~~it~~ glittered again in the last sun-beam.

* * * * *

How it fared with the traitor can be told in a few words. He won high place in the ranks to which he came covered with the leprosy of his treason. He was received with open arms by an enemy to whom he brought undaunted courage leagued with unprincipled hate. If it was honour to hold distinguished place in any service, while his very life was tainted with the worst contamination that can stain it—the contamination of a betrayer of his land—then he had honour, high and glorious. If it was happiness to live in all the splendour of existence, while his memory, like the felons of old, who, while living were chained to the dead, was doomed to linger only on events that coloured all his magnificence with guilt, and tortured his heart, if he had any, with the worst torments of a harrowed conscience, then he had happiness, unequalled and unqualified. For a season he walked in a foreign clime, covered with the stars and badges that had been purchased by the gold of defection and revenge. For a season his way, perhaps, was bright with honours, adulation, smiles, perchance with giddy joy, attendant on a giddy elevation. He saw sunshine in faces that passed him in the day, but his heart was frowned upon through the long

night. For a season the music of flattery lulled him into forgetfulness, while he walked in the crowded mart, among the children of men; but solitude woke upon his ear the far voices of conscience; the tale of a betrayed country was loud in the night-watches, and his dreams were peopled with the phantoms of a soul lost to truth on earth, and despairing of forgiveness in heaven. He sunk in silence to his pillow, and died, an old man, in the stillness of his chamber: but there was a summons ringing through the ruins of his soul that the world knew not of; there were voices round his head that his friends heard not; there were forms hovering there that his attendants saw not. Misery and everlasting woe pressed their iron hands upon his brow, and he yielded up his life in the torments of a being without even the hope of annihilation to smooth his pillow.

THE END.

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